



DE L'ORME.

BY THE AUTHOR OF
"RICHELIEU," AND "DARNLEY."

IN THREE VOLUMES.

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DE L'ORME.

CHAPTER I.

WITH a quick step Garcias led the way towards that side of the hill, which from its position was cast into shadow, and taking an upward path, that we both knew, he soon arrived in those high and lonely parts of the mountain, where solitude and silence reigned undisturbed. High above earth's habitations, nothing looked upon us but the clear blue sky and the bright calm moon, whose beams fell soft and silvery upon the tall mountain peaks around—poured into every valley—danced in every stream; and contrasted the broad, deep shadows thrown by each projecting rock, with

the bright effulgence of those spots whereon she glowed with her full power.

It was a grand and solemn scene ; and there was something inexpressibly awful in the calm sublime aspect of the giant world in which we stood—in the silence—in the moonlight—in the deep clear expanse of the profound blue sky, especially when each of those who contemplated it, had heavy on his heart the weight of human blood. It felt as if we were more immediately in the presence of heaven itself—as if the calm, bright eye of eternal Justice looked sternly into the deepest recesses of our bosoms.

Garcias seemed to feel nearly as much as I did ; and bending his eyes upon the ground he pursued his way silently and fast, till descending for some hundred yards, and turning the angle of the hill, we came under a group of high trees, which formed a beautiful object on the mountain side when viewed from the windows of the Chateau de L'Orme, and from which I could now discern the dwelling of my ancestors.

Here the smuggler stopped as if to allow me

a last view of the scenes of my infancy ; and my eye instantly running down the valley, rested on the grey towers and pinnacles of my paternal mansion with a lingering regret impossible to describe.

There lay all that I loved on earth, the objects of every better affection of my nature—there lay the scenes amongst which every happier hour had passed—there lay the spot where every early dream had been formed—where hope had arisen—where every wish returned ; and I was leaving it—leaving it perhaps for ever—with a stain upon my name, and the kindred blood of her most dear, upon my hand. My heart swelled as if it would have burst, my brain burned as with fire, and my eyes would fain have wept.

I struggled long to prevent them, and I should have succeeded ; but just while I was gazing—while a thousand overpowering remembrances and bitter regrets seemed tearing my heart to pieces, a nightingale broke out in the trees above my head, and poured forth so wild, so sweet, so melancholy a song, that my excited

feelings would bear no more, and the tears rolled over my cheeks like the large drops of a thunder-storm.

“Poor boy!” said Garcias, “I am sorry for thee! I can feel now, more than I could this morning, what thou feelest; for in truth, I would that I had not slain that Derville so rashly: and, I know not why, but I wish, what I never wished before, that the moon was not so bright—it seems as if that poor wretch were looking at me. But come, ’tis no use to think of these things. When we are in Spain we will get us absolution, and that is all that we can do. Pardon me, Monseigneur,” he added, suddenly resuming that peculiar sort of haughtiness which leads many a proud man in an inferior station to give a full portion of ceremonious deference to his superior; “Pardon me, if now, or in future, I treat you too like a companion of Pedro Garcias the smuggler. During this day, my wish to check your grief has made me uncereemonious; and till you can return, perhaps you had better waive that respect which your rank entitles you to require, for it may not

please you hereafter, to have many of those with whom you now consort for a time, boast of having been your very good friends and fellow adventurers."

I told him to call me what he liked, and to use his own discretion in regard to what account he gave of me to those, whose companion I was about to become. Little, indeed, cared I, for any part of the future : it had nothing for hope to fix upon ; and once having withdrawn my eyes from that valley, and turned upon the path before me, I was reckless about all the rest.

It seemed, however, that Garcias had found a relief in breaking the dead silence which had hung upon us so long, for he continued speaking on various topics as we went, and gradually succeeded in drawing my mind from the actual objects of my regret. Not that I forgot my grief ; far from it. It still lay a dead and heavy weight upon my heart, but my thoughts did not continue to trace every painful remembrance with the agonizing minuteness which they had lately done. Such is ever the first effect of that balm which Time pours into every wound. It

scarcely seems to lessen the anguish, but it renders it less defined.

Gradually I listened and replied, and though each minute or two, my mind reverted to myself, yet the intervals became longer, and I found it every time more easy than the last to abstract my thoughts from my own situation, and to apply them to the subjects on which he spoke.

For more than two hours we continued walking on till we arrived at the heights nearly opposite to Argelez, during which time we had climbed the hills and descended into the valleys more than once. We were now again upon the very crest of the mountain, and the moon was just sinking behind the hills to the west of the Balindrau, when Garcias paused and pointed down the course of a stream that burst precipitately over the side of the hill with so perpendicular a fall, that it almost deserved the name of a cataract.

The body of water, though then but a rivulet, was at some part of the year undoubtedly considerable, for it had channelled for itself a

deep ravine which, for some space, wound away from the valley, as if obstinately resolved to bear its tribute in any other direction than towards the principal river that flowed in the midst: but, after pursuing these capricious meandrings for a considerable way, it was obliged at length to follow the direction of the hills, and turn towards the valley in its own despite: as we often see, in some far province, a stubborn contemner of established authorities pursue for a while his own wilful way, fancying himself a man of great spirit and an independent soul, till comes some stiff official of the law, who turns him sneaking back, into the common course of life.

The bottom of the ravine, left free by the shrinking of the stream, was lined on either hand with the most luxuriant verdure, and overhung by a thousand shrubs and trees, now in their ruffling dresses of summer green. Where we then stood, however, many hundred yards above, with the moon, as I have said, sinking behind the opposite mountains, all that I could see was a dark and fearful chasm below, at the bottom

of which I caught every now and then the flash and sparkle of the stream, whose roar, as it broke from fall to fall, reached my car even at that height.

Down this abyss it was that Garcias pointed, saying that our journey's end lay there, for the present.

“If you are a true mountaineer,” added he, “you will be able to follow me; but attempt it not if you feel the least fear, for I have seldom seen a place more likely to break the neck of any but a good cragsman.”

“Go on,” replied I, “I have no fear;” and, indeed, I had become so reckless about life that had it been the jaws of hell, I would have plunged in.—And yet it appeared I was even then in the act of flying from death. Man is so made up of inconsistencies, that this would not have been extraordinary, granting it to have been the case—but it was not so. I was not flying from death, but from ignominy and shame, and the reproachful eyes of those I loved.

Garcias led the way; and certainly never did a more hazardous and precarious path receive

the steps of two human beings. Its course lay down the very face of the precipice over which the stream fell, and the only tenable steps that it afforded were formed by the broken faces of the schistus rock, without one bough of shrub or tree to offer a hold for the hands. The river at the same time kept roaring in our ears, within a yard of our course, and every now and then, where it took a more furious bound than ordinary, it dashed its spray in our faces, and over our path, confusing the sight, whose range was already circumscribed by the darkness, and rendering the rock so slippery that nothing but the talons of an eagle would have fastened steadily upon it.

At length, we came to a spot of smooth turf, with still the same degree of perpendicular declination; and to keep one's feet became now almost impossible; so that nothing seemed left but to lie down and slip from the top to the bottom. It was a dangerous experiment, for the descent might probably have terminated in a precipice which would have been difficult to avoid; but I little cared: and, with the usual

success of boldness, I lighted on a small round plot of turf, crowning another turn of the ravine. A man anxious for life would, most probably, have avoided the course of the stream, slipped past the spot on which I found a safe resting place, and been dashed over the precipice which lay scarce two yards from me.

In a moment Garcias was by my side, and asked, with some concern lest his place of retreat had been discovered, whether I had ever visited that spot before, for I seemed to know it, he said, as well as he did himself. Having assured him I never had, and that my fortunate descent was entirely accidental, he laid his hand on my arm, as if to stay me from any farther trial of the kind. "You have escaped strangely," said he: "but never make the same experiment again, unless you are something more than merely careless about life. We are now close upon my men," he added, "and we must give them notice of our approach or we may risk a shot;" and he stooped over the edge of the cliff looking down into the ravine.

It was here that the trees and shrubs, which

lined thickly the lower parts of the dell, first began to sprout; and, forming a dark screen between our eyes and the course of the stream, they would have cut off all view of what was *passing below, had it been day*; but at that hour, when all was darkness around us, and no glare of sunshine out-shone any other light, we could just catch through the foliage the sparkling of a fire, about forty yards below us; and as we gazed, a very musical voice broke out in a Spanish song. Being directly above the singer, the sounds rose distinctly to our ears, so that we could very well distinguish the words that he sang, which were to the following tenor as near as I can recollect:—

SONG.

Tread thou the mountain, Brother, Brother!
Tread thou the mountain wild!
In each other land men betray one another;
Be thou then the mountain's child.

I.

Hark! how Hidalgo to Hidalgo vows,
To serve him he'd hazard his life—
But woe to the foolish and confident spouse
If he leave him alone with his wife.—

**Tread then the mountain, Brother, Brother !
Tread then the mountain wild !
In each other land men betray one another ;
Be thou then the mountain's child.**

II.

**Lo ! how the Merchant to Merchant will say,
His credit and purse to command :
But let him fall bankrupt, I doubt, well-a-day !
No credit he 'll have at his hand.**

**Tread then the mountain, Brother, Brother !
Tread then the mountain wild !
In each other land men betray one another ;
Be thou then the mountain's child.**

III.

**Lo ! how the Statesman will promise his tool,
To raise him to honours some day :
But when he's done all he would wish, the poor fool
Will regret taking fine words for pay.**

**Tread then the mountain, Brother, Brother !
Tread then the mountain wild !
In each other land men betray one another ;
Be thou then the mountain's child.**

IV.

**Hark ! what the Courtier vows to his King,
To serve him whatever befall ;
But if evil luck dark misfortune should bring,
The Courtier turns sooner than all.**

**Tread then the mountain, Brother, Brother !
Tread then the mountain wild !
In court, crowd, and city, men cheat one another ;
Be thou then the mountain's child.**

“ He says true ! By Saint Jago, he says true ! ” cried Garcias, who had been listening as well as myself. “ Thank God, for being born a mountaineer ! ”

He ended his self-gratulation with a long whistle, so shrill that it reached the ears of the singer, to whom the noise of our voices had not arrived from the height we were above him, although his song by the natural tendency of sounds had come up to us. He answered the signal of his Captain immediately, and we instantly began to descend, making steps of the boles and roots of the trees, till lighting once more on somewhat level ground, we stood beside his watch-fire. The singer was a tall fine Arragonese, about my own age or perhaps somewhat older, who had been thrown out as a sentinel to guard the little encampment of the smugglers, which lay a couple of hundred yards farther down the ravine. He bore a striking resemblance to Garcias, whom he called cousin, and also seemed to possess some portion of his gigantic strength, if one might judge by the swelling muscles of his legs and arms,

which were easily discernible through the tight netted silk breeches and stockings he wore in common with most of his companions.

He gazed upon me for a moment or two with some surprise, and I returned his look with one of equal curiosity. In truth, I should not particularly have liked to encounter him as an adversary, for with his long gun, his knife, and his pistols, added to the vigour and activity indicated by his figure, he would have offered as formidable an opponent as I ever beheld. No questions, however, did he ask concerning me. Not a word, not an observation did he make, but resuming the characteristic gravity of the Spaniard, from which perhaps he thought his song might have somewhat derogated in the eyes of a stranger, he merely replied to a question of his cousin, that all had passed tranquilly during his absence, and cast himself down upon his checkered cloak, by the side of the watch-fire, with an air of the most perfect indifference.

At another time I might have smiled to see how true it is that nations have their affecta-

tions as well as individuals ; but I was in no smiling mood, and were I to own the truth, I turned away with a feeling of contemptuous anger at his arrogation of gravity, fully as ridiculous in me as even his mock solemnity. What had I to do^o to be angry with him ? I asked myself, after a moment's reflection : I was not born to be the whipper of all fools ; and if I was, I thought, my castigation had certainly better begin with myself.

Garcias led me on to the rest of his companions, who were stretched sleeping on the ground ; some wrapped in their cloaks, some partly sheltered from the winds, which in those mountains lose not their wintry sharpness till summer is far advanced, by little stone walls, built up from the various masses of rock that from time to time had rolled down the mountain, and strewed the bottom of the ravine. The younger men, though engaged in a life of danger and risk, slept on with the fearless slumber of youth ; but four or five of the elder smugglers, whom ancient habits of watchful anxiety rendered light of sleep, started up

with musket and dagger in their hands, long before our steps had reached their halting-place.

The figure of Garcias, however, soon quieted their alarm, and I was astonished to see how little agitation the return of their absent leader, from what had been, and always must be, a dangerous part of their enterprise, caused amongst them: nor did my presence excite any particular attention. Garcias informed them simply, that I was a friend he had long known, who now came to join them; on which they welcomed me cordially, without farther enquiry, giving me merely the *Buenas noches tenga usted Caballero*, and assigning me a spot to sleep in, near the horses, which was indeed the place of honour, being more sheltered than any other.

CHAPTER II.

SLEEP,—calm, natural sleep, was not, however, to be procured so soon; and though I laid down and remained quiet, in imitation of the smugglers, what, what would I not have given for the slumber they enjoyed! I need not go farther into my feelings,—I need not tell all the bitter and agonizing reflections that reiterated themselves upon my brain, till I thought reason would have abandoned me. What I had been,—what I was,—what I was to be,—each one of them had some peculiar pang; so that on neither the past, the present, nor the future, could my mind rest without torture: and yet I could not sleep.

It may easily be conceived then that the two

hours which elapsed, between our arrival at the rendezvous and the break of day, was a space too dreadful to be rested on without pain, even now, when the whole has been given over to the more calm dominion of remembrance:—remembrance, that has the power to rob every part of the past of its bitter, except remorse; and to mingle some sweet with even the memory of pain and misfortune, provided our own heart finds nothing therein for reproach.

As soon as the very first faint streaks of light began to interweave themselves with the grey clouds in the east, the smugglers were upon their feet, and, gathering round Garcias and myself, began to ask a great many more questions than they had ventured on the night before. My dress and my person became objects of some curiosity among them; and it so unfortunately happened that more than one of the smugglers, who had seen me at the mill in former days, instantly recognized me at present. However, as probably no one of them would have found it agreeable himself to assign his exact reasons for joining the lawless band with which he

consorted, I escaped all questions as to the cause of my appearing amongst them. Each, probably, attributed it to some separate imagination of his own; but the high favour in which our house stood with this honourable fraternity, assured me the most enthusiastic reception; and they mutually rivalled one another in their endeavours to serve me, and render my situation comfortable.

It was in vain now to attempt concealing from any one of the band, my rank in life; but in order that accident should not extend my real name beyond the mere circle of those who knew me, I followed a custom which I found they generally adopted themselves — that of distinguishing themselves, each by a different appellation, when actually engaged in any of their hazardous enterprizes, from that by which they were ordinarily known in the world. I therefore took the name of De l'Orme, to which I was really entitled by birth; the Comté de l'Orme having been in our family from time immemorial.

These arrangements, the quick questions of

the smugglers, their wild, strange manners, and picturesque appearance, all formed a relief to a mind, anxious to escape from itself; and perhaps no society into which I could have fallen, would have afforded me so much the means of abstracting my thoughts from all that was painful in my situation. After having satisfied their curiosity in regard to me, the Spaniards, to the number of twenty, gathered round Garcias to hear how he had disposed of the smuggled goods, which had been deposited at the mill; and certainly, never did a more picturesque group meet my view, than that which they presented, with their fine muscular limbs, rich coloured dresses, deep sun-burnt countenances, and flashing black eyes. While each cast himself into some of those wild and picturesque attitudes, which seem natural to mountaineers; and the form of Garcias towering above them all, looked like that of the Farnesian Hercules, fresh from the garden of the Hesperides.

Garcias' story was soon told. He informed them simply, that all was safe, produced the

little bag which contained the profits of their last adventure, and told them how much the miller expected to gain for the goods at present in his hands. I remarked, however, he wisely said not a word of the death of Derville the douannier, although undoubtedly it would have met with the high approbation of his companions ; and probably, would have given him still greater sway, than even that which he already possessed, over the minds of a class of men, on whom any thing striking and bold is never without its effect.

All this being concluded, instant preparation was made for our departure. A horse was assigned to me from amongst those which had borne the smuggled wares across the mountains ; and, all the worthy fraternity being mounted, we had already begun to wind down the ravine, in an opposite direction from that on which Garcias and myself had arrived, when the sound of voices, heard at a little distance before us, made us halt in our march. In a moment after, one of the smugglers who had been sent out as a sort of piquette in front, and whose voice we had heard, returned, dragging

along a poor little man, in whom I instantly recognized the unfortunate player apothecary, who had given me so much relief by his surgical applications a day or two before. He had a small bundle strapped upon his back, as if equipped for travelling; and seemed to be in mortal fear, holding back with all his might, while the smuggler pulled him along by the arm, as we often see a boy drag on an unwilling puppy by the collar, while the obstinate beast hangs back with its haunches, and sets its four feet firmly forward, contending stoutly every step that it is forced to make in advance.

“Here is a spy,” cried the smuggler, pulling his prisoner forward into the midst of the wild group, that our halt had occasioned; “I caught him dodging about in the bushes there, at the entrance of the ravine; and, depend on it, the *gabellateurs* are not far off.”

The poor player, who understood not one word of this Spanish accusation, gazed about, with open mouth, and starting eyes, upon the dark countenances of the smugglers, who, I believe, were only meditating whether it would be

better to throw him over the first precipice, or hang him up on the first tree; and whose looks, in consequence, did not offer any thing reassuring.

“ *Messieurs! Messieurs! respectable Messieurs!*” cried he, gazing round and round in an agony of terror, without being able to say any more; when suddenly his eye fell upon me, and darting forward with a quick spring, that loosed him from the smuggler’s hold, he cast himself upon his knees, embracing my stirrup; while half-a-dozen guns were instantly pointed at his head from the idea that he was about to make his escape. The clicking of the gun-locks increased his terror almost to madness; and, creeping under my horse’s belly, he made a sort of shield for his head, with my foot and the large clumsy stirrup-iron, crying out with the most doleful accents, “Don’t fire! don’t fire! pray don’t fire! — Monsiegnur! — Illustrious scion of a noble house! — pray don’t fire — exert thine influence benign, for the preservation of a lowly suppliant.”

By this time, one of the smugglers had again

got the player by the collar ; and, dragging him out, with some detriment to his doublet, he placed him once more in the midst. “ Garcias,” cried I, seeing them rather inclined to maltreat their captive, “ Do not let them hurt him, your companion is under a mistake. This poor little wretch, depend on it, had no more idea of spying upon your proceedings, than he had of spying into the intrigues of the moon. He is a miserable player, who is unemployed, and half starving, I believe. I will answer for his being no spy.”

At my intercession, Garcias interfered to prevent any farther annoyance being inflicted upon the hero of the buskin, and questioned him, in French, in regard to what he did there. For a moment or two, his terror and agitation deprived him of the power of explaining himself ; but soon beginning to perceive that the storm had in some degree subsided, he took courage, and, summoning up his most elevated style, he proceeded to explain his appearance amongst them, mingling, as he went on, a slight degree of sa-

tire with his bombast, which I was afraid might do him but little service with his hearers.

“Gentlemen!” cried he, “if ye be, as from your gay attire and splendid arms, your noble bearing and your bronzed cheeks, I judge ye are,—Lords of the forest and the mountain—Knights, wanderers of the wild—Magistrates, executors of your own laws, and abrogators of the laws of every other person, I beseech ye, show pity and fellow-feeling towards one who has the honour of being fully as penniless as yourselves; who, though he never yet had courage enough to cut a purse, or talent enough to steal one, has ever been a great admirer of those bold and witty men, who maintain the blessed doctrine of the community of this world’s goods, at the point of the sword; and put down the villainous monopoly of gold and silver with a strong hand and a loaded pistol.”

“Make haste, good friend!” cried Garcias smiling; “we are not what you take us for, but we have as much need of concealment as if we were. Therefore, if you would escape hanging on that bough, give a true account of

yourself in as few words as possible. Such active tongues as your's sometimes slip into the mire of falsehood. See that it be not the case with you. Say, how came you in this unfrequented part of the country, at this early hour?"

"Admirable Captain!" cried the player, again beginning to tremble for his life, "you shall hear the strange mysterious turns of fate that conducted me hither, to a part of which, that noble scion of an illustrious house—who seems either to be your prisoner or your friend, I know not which; but who, in either capacity, is equally honourable and to be honoured,—can bear witness. Know then, magnanimous chief, no later than yesterday morning, towards the hour of noon, according to that illustrious scion's express command, I proceeded to the principal gate of the mighty Château de l'Orme, where I had expected a certain farther fee or reward, which he promised me for having solaced and assuaged the pains of those wounds still visible upon his brow and hands. But judge of my surprise when, on entering the court-yard, I found the whole place in confusion and dismay ;

men mounting in haste, women screaming at leisure, dogs barking, horses neighing, and asses braying; and on my addressing myself to an elderly gentleman with a long nose, for all the world like a sausage of Bigorre, asking him, with a sweet respectful smile, if he could show me to my Lord the young Count, he bestowed a buffet on my cheek, which had even a greater effect than the buffet which Moses gave the rock, for it brought fire as well as water out of my eyes both at once."

"And what was the cause of all this tumult? Did you hear?" demanded Garcias, who had observed my eye, while the player told what he had seen at the Château de l'Orme, straining up his countenance with an anxiety that would bear no delay.

"To speak the truth, most mighty potentate of the mountains," replied the stroller, "I asked no farther questions where such answers seemed amongst the most common forms of speech. I thought the striking reply of my first respondent quite sufficient, though not very satisfactory; and, judging he might like

my back better than my face, I got my heels over the threshold, and came away as fast as possible. I did not return to the cottage where I had spent the last six weeks, for I had happily my pack on my back, and my worthy host and hostess were so much obliged to me for boarding and lodging with them all that time, that I doubt they would have retained my goods and chattels as a keepsake, if I had ventured myself within reach of their affectionate embraces; though, God help me! they had already kept, as a remembrance, the gold piece which Monseigneur gave me at first. I, last night, made my way to Argelez, and liberally offered the gross-minded *aubergiste* of the place, to treat himself and his company to the whole of "The Cid," to be enacted by myself alone, for the simple consideration of a night's lodging and a dinner; but he—most grovelling brute! fingered my doublet with his cursed paw, and said he was afraid the dresses and decorations would be too expensive, as they must evidently all be new. Indignantly I turned upon my heel, and walked on till I

came to this valley, where I found a nice warm bush, and slept out my night after Father Adam's fashion. This morning, hearing voices, and knowing not whence they came, I began to look about with some degree of caution, when suddenly pounces upon me this dark-browed gentleman, and drags me hither, to the manifest injury of my poor doublet, which, God help it ! has had so many a pull from old mischievous Time, that it can ill bear the rude touch of any other fingers. This is my tale, renowned Sir, and if it be not true, may the buskin never fit my foot, may the dagger break in my grasp, and the bowl tumble out of my fingers !”

The latter part of the poor player's speech had been sufficiently long to give me the time necessary for recovering from the effect of that portion of it which had personally affected myself, and I pointed out to Garcias that his tale must undoubtedly be true, begging him at the same time to free the poor little man and send him away.

“No, no !” replied the smuggler, “that

must not be. He has found his way to a retreat which none but ourselves know: such secrets are heavy things to carry, and he might drop his burden at some *douannier's* door who would pay for it in gold. No! no! willing, or unwilling, he must come with us to Spain, and we will teach him a better trade than ranting other people's nonsense to amuse as great fools as himself."

The little player at first seemed somewhat astounded at such an unexpected alteration in his prospects, but learning that, in the very first place, board and lodging was to be provided for him, and a horse as soon as one could be procured, his countenance brightened up, and he trudged contentedly after the band of smugglers, eating a large lump of cheese and a biscuit which Garcias had given him as occupation on the road.—Strange, strange world, where the most abject poverty is the surest buckler against misfortune! When I stood and considered that wretched player's feelings and my own, and saw how little he was affected by

things which would have pained me to the very soul—how little he heeded being torn from his native land, with nothing but blank uncertainty before him, and how he enjoyed the crust which fortune had given him, I could hardly help envying his very misery, which so armoured him against all the shafts of adversity to which I stood nakedly opposed.

My present journey through the Pyrenees, though tending very nearly in the same direction as the first, lay amongst scenes of a still wilder description, for the smugglers carefully avoid all the ordinary paths, and, though now unburdened with any seizable goods, as heedfully guarded against a meeting with the officers of the *douanne*, as if they were escorting a whole cargo. They seemed to take a delight in the mystery and secrecy of their ways, but in truth they found it necessary to keep the whole world, except those concerned, in perfect ignorance of the great extent to which their contraband traffic was carried on; and, for this purpose, glided along through the deepest

shades of the pine forests, and over the highest and least frequented parts of the hills, by paths impracticable to any but themselves.

Towards the close of the first day we halted by the side of a small mountain-lake, whose calm, still, shadowy waves, I almost hoped were the waters of oblivion. Round about, the mountains rose up on every side, seeming to shelter it from a world, and not a breath of wind rippled the surface of the water, so that the reflections of the high snowy peaks of the hills above, the dark rocks that dipped themselves in its waves, and the gloomy pines that skirted it to the east, were all seen looking up like ghosts from below, while ever and anon a light evening cloud skimming over the sky found there its reflection too, and was seen gliding over the bosom of the calm expanse. The turf that spread from the margin of the lake to the bases of the mighty rocks that towered up around, was covered with every kind of flower, though at so great an elevation; and the rhododendron in full blossom vied with the beautiful pink saffron, as if striving which

should most embellish that favoured spot of green that Nature seemed to have fancifully placed there, as a contrast between the cold dark waters and the stern gray rock.

When, after alighting from my horse, I gazed round on the whole scene, and then thought of returning to the world, with its idle bustle, and its thronging pains, and its vain babble, and unbroken discontent, I was tempted to cast it all from me at once, and become a hermit even there, spending my time in the contemplation of eternity; but the thoughts that thrugged upon me during one brief half hour of solitude, while the smugglers were occupied in making their arrangements for the night, showed me that the gayest scenes of the busy world would still leave me, perhaps, more time for memory than I could wish memory to fill.

At length my meditations were disturbed by the approach of the little player, who seemed quite contented with his fate. As he came near he stretched forth his hand, threw back his head, and was beginning with his usual em-

phasis to address me as “*Illustrious scion of a noble house,*” when I stopped him in the midst somewhat peevishly, bidding him drop his high-flown style if he would have me listen to him, and never to use it to me again if he wished not such a reply as had been bestowed upon him by my father’s *maitre d’hotel*. This warning and threat had a very happy effect, for he seldom afterwards poured forth any of his redomontade upon me, and when denuded of its frippery, his conversation was not without poignancy.

“Well, Sir,” said he, after my rebuff, “I will treat you to plain prose, as you love not the high and metaphorical. Be it known then unto your worship, that our friends with the dark faces have prepared something for dinner, and invite you to partake of some excellent Bayonne ham, and some unfortunate young trout, that an artful vagabond with an insinuating countenance has seduced out of the protecting bosom of their parent lake, and abandoned to the vile appetite of his companions. Added to this, you will find some excellent

botargis, which you doubtless are aware is manufactured out of the roe of the mullet, and provokes drinking, a propensity that you may satisfy at discretion, out of certain skins of wine for that purpose made and provided—as my poor dear supposed father used to say, who turned me out of his house when I was nine years old.”

I had too little love for my own thoughts to remain any longer alone than I could avoid, and rising, I followed the little player to a spot where the smugglers had spread out their supper upon Nature's table. This was the first meal I had seen amongst them, and I found that they eat but once a day; but to do them all manner of justice, when they did apply themselves to satisfy their hunger, they amply compensated for their abstinence, and as they intended to proceed no farther that night, they were not more sparing of their wine than of their other viands. Gradually, as the potent juice of the grape began to warm their veins, all Spanish reserve wore away, and mirth and jocularity succeeded. Jest, and tale, and song,

went round ; and even Garcias seemed to banish every circumstance of the past, and to enjoy himself as fully, as forgetfully as the rest.

To what was this owing ? I asked myself,—To the wine-cup !—It had taught them forgetfulness !—It was temporary oblivion !—It was happiness !—and I drained it, and redrained it, to obtain the same blessing for myself. Strange how one error ever brings on another ! and thus it is that amendment is still so difficult to those who have done wrong —'tis not alone, that they have to renounce the fault they have once committed, but that they have also to struggle against all those which that one brings in its train.

I drank deep for forgetfulness ; and certainly amongst the companions into whose society circumstances had thrown me, I was not without encouragement. The wine they had brought with them was excellent and abundant ; and when any one began to flag in his potation, the rest seemed to cry him on, as soldiers encourage one another in a march. Sometimes it was a story, sometimes a jest, sometimes a song ; and of the latter, they had more amongst them than

I had supposed could be invented on one subject. The last that I remember, was sung by the same musical youth, whom Garcias and myself had found acting as sentinel when we joined the smugglers near Argelez. His single voice gave out the separate verses of the song to a merry Spanish air, while all the rest joining in at the end, raised a deafening din with the very absurd chorus.

SONG.

“ Woman first invented wine,
Ere man found out to drink it ;*
If otherwise, she wer'n't divine,
For this we're bound to think it.

CHORUS.

Malaga and Alicant,
Xeres and La Mancha !
Whatever cup she offers man,
We'll take it, and we'll thank her !
Cold water 's but a sober thing,
That 's only fit for asses—”

But before he had concluded, or his companions began roaring again about Malaga and Alicant, my cup fell out of my hand, and I slept.

* The same fancy is current amongst many Eastern nations, and probably arrived at the Spanish smugglers' through their Moorish ancestors.

CHAPTER III.

I BELIEVE my sleep would have lasted longer than the night, had Garcias not woke me towards day-break, and told me that they were preparing to depart. Amongst the smugglers, every one took care of his own horse, and of course, I could not expect to be exempt from the same charge in their wandering republic, where the only title to require service oneself was the having shown it to others. I started up, therefore, in order to repair, as much as I could, my negligence of the night before. To my surprise, however, I found that the horse had been already rubbed down and saddled by the little player; who, having drunk more cautiously than myself, had woke early in the

morning ; and, after having shown this piece of attention to me, was engaged in tricking out, for his own use, an ass, which one of the smugglers had procured from some acquaintance at the foot of the mountain. I thanked the little man for his civility, when laying his hand upon his heart, he professed his pleasure in serving me, and begged, in humble terms, if I had any thought of engaging a servant in the expedition wherein we were both engaged, that he might be preferred to that high post.

“ The post would certainly be more honourable than profitable, my good friend,” replied I, with some very melancholy feelings concerning my own destitute condition, for my whole fortune consisted of about thirty Louis d’ors and a diamond ring, the value of which I did not know. “ I must tell you thus much concerning my situation,” I added ; “ I am now quitting my father’s house and my native land, from circumstances which concern me alone, but which may render my absence long ; and during that absence, I expect no supply or pecuniary

aid from any one. You may now judge," I proceeded with somewhat of a painful smile, "whether such a man's service be the one to suit you."

"Exactly!" replied the little player to my surprise, "for during the time you have nothing to give me, you will judge whether I am like to suit you when you can pay me well. I ask no wages but meat and drink. That, I am sure, you will give me while you can get any for yourself; and if a time should come when you can get none, perhaps it may be my turn to put my hand in fortune's bag, and pull out a dinner. Alone, and with no one to help me, I have never wanted food, but that one day at Argelez; and, God knows, I never knew from day to day where I should fill my cup or load my platter, but in company with your Lordship—never fear, we shall always find plenty. Two people can accomplish a thousand things that one cannot. You can do a thousand that I do not know how to do, and I can do a thousand that you would be ashamed to do. Thank God, for having been turned out upon the world

at nine years old, without a sous in my pocket. 'Twas the best school in nature for finishing my education."

I was hurt, I own, at the sort of companionship which the miserable little player seemed to have established, in his own mind, so completely between himself and me; and the haughty noble was rising with some acrimony to my lips, when I suddenly bethought me, what a thing I was to be proud over my fellow-worm! It was a thought to take down the high stomach of my nobility, and after a moment's pause I merely replied, "Your life must afford a curious history, and doubtless has been full both of turns of fate and turns of ingenuity."

"Oh, 'tis a very simple history," answered the player, "as brief as the courtship of a widow. When your Lordship has got on horse-back, and I have clambered on my ass, I will tell it to you as we go along. 'Twill at least spend a long five minutes."

His proposal was not disagreeable to me, for my mind was in that state when any thing which could fill up a moment with some external feel-

ing or interest, was in itself a blessing. Had he told such a tale as those with which they amuse children in a nursery, I should have been contented; and accordingly, as soon, after having mounted, as we were once more on our journey, I begged he would proceed, which he complied with as follows :—

“ My mother’s husband, who had the credit— if any honour was thereunto attached—of being my father, was, when I can first remember him; Intendant to the estates of M. le Comte de Bagnols. He had originally studied the law, but not having money enough to purchase any charge at the bar, he was very glad to take the management of a young nobleman’s estates, who, though not indeed careless and extravagant, was still young—consequently inexperienced—consequently plunderable, and consequently a hopeful speculation for one in my father’s situation. The Count was liberal, and therefore the appointments were in themselves good, consisting of a separate house half a mile from the chateau, a considerable glebe of land, and a salary of a thousand crowns. I must remark

here, that the Intendant was the ugliest man in Christendom, but he had the advantage of possessing in my poor dear mother a very handsome wife, whose beauties he considered as a certain means of performing the curious alchemical process of the transmutation of metals; that is to say, the changing his own brass into the Count's gold.

“ Now, I should be most happy could I claim any kindred with the noble family of Bagnols, but sorry I am to say, I was several years old when the young Count returned to the chateau from his campaigns with the army. Nor, indeed, should I have been much better off had fortune decreed me to be born afterwards; for though the worthy Intendant was as liberal as Cato in many respects, and the most decided foe to all sorts of jealousy; and though my mother also was a complete prodigal in the dispensation of her smiles, the Count was as cold as ice. Indeed, as his marriage with the beautiful Henriette de Vergne was soon after brought on the carpet, I can hardly blame him for thinking of no one else. All went on well for

two years, during which time my mother had twice occasion to call upon Lucina, and the Intendant was gratified by finding himself the father of two other sturdy children. At the end of that time, however, the marriage of the Count was broken off with Mademoiselle de Vergne, and the young lady was promised to the Marquis de St. Brie. You have heard all that sad story, I dare say? The Marquis not liking a rival at liberty—for they began to whisper that the Count still privately saw Mademoiselle de Vergne, and some even said was married to her—had him arrested and thrown into prison, on an accusation of aiding the rebels at Rochelle. The Count, however, found means to write to the Intendant a letter from the Bastille, containing two orders; one was to send him instantly a certain packet of papers containing the proofs of his innocence, the other, to sell as speedily as possible all the alienable part of his property, and to transmit the amount to a commercial house at Saragossa. The worthy Intendant set himself to consider his own interests,

and finding that it would be best to keep his lord in prison, he could never discover the papers. At the same time, the buying and selling of a large property is never without its advantage to the steward, and, therefore, he punctually obeyed the Count's command in this particular, selling all that he could sell, and transmitting the money to Spain, at the end of which transaction he found himself very comfortably off in the world. One night, while he sat counting his gains, however, he was somewhat surprised by a visit from the Count, who had made his escape from the Bastille, and came to make his Intendant a call, much more disagreeable than interesting.

“ So much did the Intendant wish his lord at the devil, that he was civil to him beyond all precedent; and having gone up in the dark to the chateau, they spent two hours in diligent search for the papers, which they unfortunately could not find, for this very good reason, the Intendant had taken care to remove them three or four days before, and had given them in charge

to his dear friend and co-labourer, the Count's apothecary, to keep them as a sacred deposit as much out of the Count's way as possible.

“After all this, sorry to have lost the papers, but glad to find he had a considerable fortune placed securely in Spain, the Count set out to seek his fair Henriette, resolving to carry her to another land; and thinking all the while that his Intendant was the honestest man in the world. Under this impression, he made him his chief agent in all his plans, told him of his private marriage, and in short, did what very wise men often do, let the greatest rogue of his acquaintance into all his most important secrets.

“The Marquis de St. Brie very soon found out the proceedings of his friend the Count. The Count was of course assassinated, and thrown into the river; the Countess was put into a convent, where she died in child-birth, and God knows what became of the money in Spain. Matters being thus settled to the satisfaction of every one, the Intendant found he had quite enough money to set up procureur,

and went to live in the same town with his dear friend the apothecary."

"But what became of the papers?" demanded I; "and why do you always call him the Intendant? were you a son by some former marriage of your mother?"

"Be patient! be patient! Monsieur le Comte, and you shall hear," replied the little player. "I was just about to return to my mother, with regard to whom a man may feel himself tolerably certain. There is a proverb against human presumption in speaking of one's father, '*Sage enfant qui connoit son père!*' However, my mother was, as I have said, a very handsome woman, and she made use of her advantages; but at the same time, she was a very superstitious one, and though she governed her husband in all domestic matters with a rod of iron, she suffered herself to be governed by her confessor in a manner still more despotic. Never used she to fail in her attendance at the confessional, and yet I never heard the good priest complain that she troubled him unnecessarily.

“ At length it so happened that she fell ill, and the only thing that could have saved her, namely, the physicians giving her up, having been tried in vain, and she being both in the jaws of death and in a great fright, her priest would not give her absolution except upon a very hard condition, which she executed as follows. She sent for her husband, and having bade him adieu in very touching terms, upon which he wept—he could always weep when he liked—she sent for his dear friend the apothecary, for a worthy goldsmith of the city, and for a couple of young gentlemen our neighbours, and having brought them all into her bedroom, she acknowledged to her husband all her faults and failings, comprising many which I, in my filial piety, will pass over; after which she begged his forgiveness, and obtained it—requested and received in so touching a manner, that every one wept. She then made her excellent spouse embrace his injurers, which he did like a charitable soul and a sensible man, with a most solemn and edifying countenance. After this she called all her children, of which there were

by this time four, round her, and having given us her blessing and her last advice in a very striking and instructive manner, she allotted us severally to the care of her friends. My next brother she bequeathed to the fatherly tenderness of the Intendant himself; though there was an unfortunately small degree of likeness between them. I fell to the portion of the Apothecary; the youngest son was assigned to the protection of the Goldsmith, and so on. When this distribution was concluded she found herself very much exhausted, and, sending us all away, fell into a profound sleep, from which she woke the next morning in a fair way for recovery. The Confessor declared that it was the special interposition of heaven, as a reward for her punctual obedience to his commands; but her husband thought it the handywork of the devil, on which difference of conclusion I shall not offer an opinion. Suffice it, my mother recovered, and finding that the story had got abroad, and that every one she met laughed at or avoided her, she insisted on her husband changing his abode and carrying her

and her family to another town. At length, however, her malady returned upon her after a year's absence, and she died for good and all, leaving her husband inconsolable for her loss. The moment the breath was out of her body, the excellent Procureur took me to the door of his house, and told me tenderly to get along for a graceless little vagabond, and none of his. 'Go to Auch! go to Auch!' cried he, 'and tell that villain of an Apothecary I have sent him his own.' To Auch I accordingly went, and delivered the Procureur's message to the Apothecary, who held up his hands and eyes at the hard-heartedness of his former friend, and giving me a silver piece of a livre tournois, he bade me go along, and not trouble him any more.

"The next morning, when my livre was spent, and I began to grow hungry, I naturally turned my steps towards the Apothecary's, and hung about near his door without daring to enter, when suddenly I saw him driving out in fury the boy that carried his medicines, who had been guilty, I found afterwards, of drink-

ing the wine set apart for making antimonial wine ; and so great was the rage of my worthy parent, that he threw both the pestle and the mortar into the street after the culprit.

“ Having had all my life a sort of instinctive dislike to the society of an angry man, I was in the act of gliding away as fast as I could, when his eye fell upon me, and beckoning me to him, he called to me to come near, in a tone that made me obey instantly. ‘ Come hither,’ cried he, “ come hither ! Now I wager an ounce of kermes to a grain of jalap that thou hast been well taught to thief and to lie ! Hey ? Is it not so ?”—‘ No, your worship,’ answered I, trembling every limb, ‘ but I dare say I shall soon learn under your teaching.’ ‘ Holla ! thou art malapert,’ cried he ; ‘ but come in ; out of pure charity I will give thee the place of that thief I have just kicked out. But remember, it is out of pure charity—thou hast no claim on me whatever ! mark that ! But if thou servest me truly, and appliest thyself to my lessons, I will make thee a rival to Galen and Hippocrates. Thus was I esta-

blished as medicine-boy at my father the Apothecary's, after having been turned out of my father the Procureur's, and soon learned his mood and his practice. The first was somewhat arbitrary but despotic, and, by taking care never to contradict him, except where he wished to be contradicted, I soon ingratiated myself with him to a very high degree.

“ His practice also was very simple. Whenever he was called in to any patient, he began by giving them an emetic, to clear away all obstructions, as he said. He next inquired if the complaint was local, and where? If it was in the head he put a blister on the soles of the feet; if it was in the lower extremities he placed one on the crown of the head; if it was between the two he took care to blister both. When the malady was general, he began by bleeding, and went on by bleeding, till the patient died or recovered; declaring all the while, that let the disease be as bad as it would, he would have it out of him one way or other. He had a good deal of practice when I came, and it rapidly increased, for he was always

called in by poor dependants, who expected legacies, to their rich relatives; by young heirs of estates to old annuitants; by the expectants of abbeys, and persons possessing survivorships to their dear friends the long-lived incumbents: and he was also applied to frequently by young wives for their old husbands, and other cases of the kind, wherein he was supposed to practise very successfully. As I grew up he initiated me into all the secrets of his profession, took me to the bedside of his patients, and in fact gave me many a paternal mark of his regard! Nor did he confine his confidence in me entirely to professional subjects. It was from him that I learned the earlier part of my own history, and that of the Count de Bagnols, whose papers I had many an opportunity of seeing, for they lay wrapped in a piece of old sheepskin in the drawer with the syringes. Thus passed the time till a company of players visited Auch, and as every night of their performance I went to see them, I speedily acquired a taste—I may say a passion, for the stage, which evidently showed that nature had destined me to wear

the buskin. From that moment I was seized with horror at the indiscriminate slaughter which I daily aided in committing, and I resolved to quit Auch the very first opportunity. This, however, did not occur immediately, for before I could prepare my plans the players had left the place, and I was obliged to remain in my sanguinary profession for another year, during which I learned by heart every play that had ever been written in the French language. One day, while I was sitting alone reading Rotrou, a man came in and addressed me with an air of cajolery which instantly put me on my guard ; but when he gave me to understand, after a thousand doublings, that he wished to know if ever I had heard my father, or, as he called him, ‘master,’ talk of certain papers belonging to the late Count de Bagnols, which might be of the greatest service in clearing the honour of his family ; and when at the same time he offered me ten Louis d’ors if I could find the papers, I became as pliant as wax, slipped one hand into the drawer, took the money with the other, delivered the papers,

and recommenced my book.[†] My father never missed the papers; and when the players returned I lost no time, but addressed myself to their manager, who made me recite some verses, applauded me highly, declared he wanted a new star, and that if I would steal away from my gallipots and join the company a mile from Auch, I should meet with my desert. I took him at his word, and easily executed my plan during the Apothecary's absence. My name was soon changed to Achilles Lefranc, and the provincial spectators found out that I was a genius of a superior class. Ambition, the fault of gods, misled our little troop, and thinking to carry all before us, we went to Paris, obtained permission to perform, and chose a deep tragedy, at which the malicious Parisians roared with laughter from beginning to end. We slunk out of Paris in the middle of the night, but the bond of union was gone amongst us, and we dispersed. Since then I have hawked my talents from village to village, and from company to company; sometimes I have risen to the highest flights of tragedy, and

have trod the stage as a king or a hero, and at others I have descended to the lowest walk of comedy, and, for the sake of a mere dinner, performed the part of jester at a marriage entertainment or a *fête de village* ; I have been applauded and hissed, wept at and laughed at, but I have always contrived to make my way through the world, till here I am at last your Lordship's — humble servant."

CHAPTER IV.

THE player's account of himself had interested me more than he knew, especially that part of it which referred to the unfortunate Count de Bagnols. There seemed something extraordinary in the chance, which threw circumstance after circumstance of his history upon my knowledge; and I felt a superstitious sort of feeling about it, which was weak, I own, but which was pardonable perhaps in a mind labouring like mine under a high degree of morbid excitement.

I fancied that I was destined to be the Count's avenger; and I felt, at the same time, that I should be doing human nature good service in ridding the world of such a man as

the Marquis de St. Brie; nor did I believe that the eye of Heaven could look frowningly upon so signal an act of justice. I reasoned, finely too, upon the right of an individual to execute that retributive punishment which either the laws of his country were inadequate to perform, or its judges unwilling to enforce. But where was there ever yet a deed unsusceptible of fine reasoning to justify it to the doer? Acts wellnigh as black as the revolt of Satan, have met able defenders in their day; and in the prejudiced tribunal of my own bosom I easily found a voice to sanction what I had already determined.

In regard to the papers of the Count de Bagnols, which had fallen into my possession by so curious a train of circumstances, I had them still about me; but I did not think fit to mention the circumstance to Monsieur Achilles Lefranc, upon whose judgment I had no great reason to rely. I determined, however, if fortune should ever permit me to revisit my own country, to seek out the nearest relations of the Count, and to deliver the papers into their

hands as an act of justice to the memory of that unhappy nobleman ; and I also felt a sort of stern pleasure in the hope of once more measuring my sword with the daring villain whose many detestable actions seemed to call loudly for chastisement. There might be a touch of over-excited enthusiasm — of that sort of exaltation of mind which men call fanaticism in religion, and which borders upon frenzy when it relates to the common affairs of life ; but I hope — I believe — nay, I am sure that there was no thirst of personal revenge in that wish. I felt indignant that such a man should have been allowed to live so long, and that neither private vengeance nor public justice should yet have overtaken him with the fate he so well merited ; and my sensations, which were at all times irritable enough, had been worked up, by the scenes and circumstances I had lately gone through, to a pitch of excitement which not every man could feel, and none perhaps can describe.

While little Achilles had been engaged in recounting his history, he had kept close by

my side, jogging on upon his ass, looking like a less corpulent and more youthful Sancho Panza, accompanying a less gaunt and grimly Quixote. Not that I believe my appearance had been much improved by two such nights as I had passed, nor indeed was the bandage round my head very ornamental ; and in this respect was I but the better qualified to represent the doughty hero of *La Mancha*. No adventures, however, of any kind attended our journey ; and we passed the mountains and descended into Spain undisturbed. Towards three o'clock, after having proceeded near ten miles in an eastern direction, we reached a little village, which seemed a great resort of the smugglers ; for here every one of them was known, and several of them had their habitations ; if indeed such a name could be applied to the spot where they only rested a few brief days in the intervals of their long and frequent absences.

The moment our cavalcade was seen upon the hill above the village, a bustle made itself manifest amongst the inhabitants ; and we could perceive a boy running from house to

house spreading the glad news. A crowd of women and children assembled in an instant, and coming out to meet us, expressed their joy with a thousand gratulatory exclamations. The rich golden air of a spring afternoon in Spain: the picturesque cottages covered with their young vines, and scattered amongst the broken masses of the mountain; the gay dresses of the Spanish mountaineers, the graceful forms of the women and children, and the beautiful groups into which they fell as they advanced to greet us, all offered a lovely and interesting sight to the eyes of a stranger. It was one of the pictures of Claude Gelée wakened into life.

Every one sprang to the ground, and a thousand welcomes and embraces were exchanged; the sight of which made my heart swell with feelings I cannot describe.—There were none to embrace or to welcome me!

Amongst the foremost of those who came to meet us on our arrival, was a beautiful young woman of the most delicate form and feature I ever beheld; exquisitely lovely in every line;

but so slight, so fragile, it seemed as if the very breath of the mountain-wind would have torn her like a butterfly. She ran on, however, with a quicker step than all the rest, and casting herself into the gigantic arms of Garcias, gazed up in his face with a look of that tender affection not to be mistaken, while a glistening moisture in her eye told how very, very glad she was to see him returned in safety. She was the last person on earth one would have imagined the wife of the fierce and daring man, to whom her fate was united. But Garcias with her was not fierce; it seemed as if to him her tenderness was contagious; and the moment his eye met hers, its fire sunk and softened, and it only seemed to reflect the tender glance of her own.

After giving a delicious moment or two to the first sweet feelings of his return, the smuggler appeared suddenly to remember me, and taking me by the hand, he presented me to his wife as a French gentleman, to whom he and his were indebted for much; adding, that all the hospitality she could show me would not repay

the kindness and patronage he had received from my house. She received me with a modesty, and a grace, and a simple elegance, I had hardly expected to meet in an insignificant mountain village; and led the way to their dwelling, which was by far the best in the place, not even excepting that of the principal officer of the Spanish customs, who, somewhat to my surprise, came out of his house to welcome back Garcias, with more friendship than I could have supposed to exist between a smuggler and a *douannier*.

Our arrival was the signal for feasting and merriment. Some of the youths of the village had been very successful in the chase, and the delicate flesh of the izzard, with fine white bread, and excellent wine, were in such abundance, that my poor little follower Achilles Lefranc ate, and drank, and sang, and gesticulated, seeming to think himself quite in the land of promise. He busied himself about every thing; and though he neither understood nor spoke one word of the language, he was so gay, and so lively, and so well pleased

himself, that he won the good will of the whole village.

After affording us shelter till we had supped, as soon as the sun began to sink behind the mountains, every house in the place poured forth its inhabitants upon a little green. In the centre stood a group of high ash-trees, under which the great majority seated themselves, notwithstanding the disagreeable odour of the cantharides which were buzzing about thickly amongst the branches; the rest took it in turns to dance to the music of a guitar which was played by the young smuggler, whose vocal powers I had already been made acquainted with.

Never in court or drawing-room did I see more grace or more beauty than on that village green; while the awful masses of the mountains, stretching blue and vast behind, offered a strange grand contrast to the light figures of the gay ephemeral beings that were sporting like butterflies before me. The mingling of the two scenes, and the calm placidity which both tended to inspire, did not

fail to find its way to my heart, and to soothe and quiet the anguish which had not yet left it. In the mean while the musician joined his voice to the notes of his guitar, and sang one of their village songs.

SONG.

I.

"Dance! Dance! Dance! Life so quick is past,
Seize ye its minutes for joy as they fly :
Existence' flowers so brief a space may last,
'Twere pity to see them but blossom and die.

II.

Dance! Dance! Dance! On the roses tread,
That swift-fleeting Time shall let fall ere he go ;
He's now in his spring, but full soon shall he shed
On every dark riolet his wintry snow.

III.

Dance! Dance! Dance! Cheat the heavy hours,
They're tyrants would bind us to Time's chariot
fast ;
Weave then a chain of gay summer flowers,
And make them our slaves while youth's reign shall
last."

He had scarcely ended, and was still continuing the air upon his guitar, when a horse's feet were heard clattering up over the stones

of the village, and in a minute or two after, a young man rode up, dressed in a costume somewhat different from that of the villagers, but still decidedly Spanish. On his appearance, the dance instantly stopped, several voices crying "It is Francisco from Lerida. He brings news of Fernandez! What news of Fernandez?" together with a variety of other exclamations and interrogatories, making a quantum of noise and confusion sufficient to prevent his answering any one distinctly for at least five minutes after his arrival. The horseman, however, seemed but little disposed to reply to any one, slowly dismounting from his horse with what appeared to me an air of assumed importance.

"Ah! he is playing his old tricks," cried one of the merry boys of the village; "he wants to frighten us about Fernandez."

"No, indeed!" cried Francisco with a sigh; "I have, as the old story-book goes, so often cried out *wolf*! that perhaps you will not believe me now when it is true: but I bring you all sad news, and with a heavy heart I

bring it. To you my cousin, especially," he continued, speaking to Garcias' wife, who sat beside her husband with her elbow leaning on his knee—"I know not well how to tell you what I have got to relate; but I came off in speed this morning, to see what we could all do to mend a bad business. Your brother Fernandez is now in prison at Lerida, and I am afraid that worse may come of it."

"In prison! Why? How? What for?" exclaimed Garcias starting up; "he shall not be in prison long!"

"I fear me he will," replied the other shaking his head,—“I fear me he will, if ever he come out of it. You all know the dreadful state of our province of Catalonia since that tyrant villain the Count-duke has filled it with the most lawless and undisciplined soldiers in Spain. For the last three months our minds have been worked up to a pitch of desperation which every day threatened to plunge us into anarchy and revolt; wrong upon wrong, exaction after exaction, oppression out-doing oppression——”

“But Fernandez—what of him?” cried Garcias. “Speak of him, Francisco. We well know what you have endured.”

“Well, then, all I can tell you of him is this,” proceeded the Catalonian, apparently not well pleased at having been interrupted in the fine oration he was making: “As far as I could hear, for I was not present, he interfered to prevent one of the base soldados from maltreating a woman in the street. The soldier struck him. Fernandez is not a man to bear a blow, and he plunged his knife some six inches into his body. He was immediately arrested, disarmed, and carried to the castle. If the soldier dies, he will, they say, be shot off from one of the cannon’s mouths; if he recovers, the galleys are to be Fernandez’s doom for life.”

The wife of the smuggler had listened to this account of her brother’s situation without proffering a word either of inquiry or remark; but I saw her cheek, like a withering rose, growing paler and paler as the incautious narrator proceeded, till at length, as he mentioned the horrible fate likely to befall the hero of his

tale, she fell back upon the turf totally insensible.

The effect of the history had been different upon Garcias ; his brow became bent as the speaker went on, it is true ; but the passionate agitation, which at first seemed to affect him, wore away, and he assumed a cold sort of calmness, which remained uninterrupted even upon the fainting of his wife. He raised her in his arms, however, and bidding Francisco wait a moment till he could return, he carried her away towards their own dwelling, accompanied by all the women of the place, in whose care he left her. On coming back, he questioned the Catalonian keenly to ascertain whether his brother-in-law had been in any degree to blame ; but from all the replies he could obtain, it appeared that the conduct of the soldier had been gross and outrageous in the extreme ; that Fernandez, as they called him, had merely interfered, when no man but a coward or a pander could have refrained, and that he actually stabbed the soldier in defence of his own life.

Garcias made no observation, but he held his hand upon the pommel of his sword ; and every now and then his fingers clasped upon it, with a sort of convulsive motion, which seemed to indicate that all was not so quiet within as the tranquillity of his countenance bespoke.

“ Well,” said he, at length looking up to the sky, which by this time began to show more *than one twinkling star, shining like a diamond* through the blue expanse ; “ well, it is too late to-night to think of what can be done. Come, Francisco, you want both food and rest—come, you must lodge with us : Monsieur de L’Orme,” he added, turning to me, and speaking in French, “ you will find our lodging but hard, and our fare but poor, but if you will take the best of welcomes for seasoning to the one, and for down to the other, you could not have more of it in a palace.”

I returned home with him to his cottage ; but not wishing to intrude more than I could help upon his privacy, when I knew his wife was both ill in body and in mind, and fearful also of interrupting any conversation he might

wish to have with his companion, I retired to a room which had been prepared for me, and undressing myself with the assistance of my little follower Achilles, who made a most excellent extempore valet de chambre, I cast myself on the bed, hardly hoping to sleep. A long day of fatigue had been friendly to me, however, in this respect ; and I scarcely saw my little attendant nestle himself into a high pile of dried rosemary, with which the mountains abound, and which, with the addition of a cloak, forms the bed of many a mountaineer, before I was myself asleep.

My slumbers remained unbroken till I was awakened by Garcias shaking me by the arm. It was still deep night, and starting up, I saw by the light of a lamp which he carried, that he was completely dressed, and armed with more precaution than even during his excursions into France.

“ I have to ask your pardon, Monseigneur,” said he, in a low deep tone, as soon as I was completely awake, “ for thus disturbing you, and, indeed, it was my intention not to have

done so ; but I am about to set out for Lerida, and before I go, I wish to lay before you such plans as are most feasible for your comfort and safety in Spain. In the first place, you can remain here, if a poor village, and poor fare, and mountain sports, may suit you ; but if you do, your time may hang heavy on your hands, and beware of lightening it with the smiles of our women — remember, the Spaniard is jealous by nature, and revengeful too ; and there is not a black-eyed girl in this village, that has not some one to watch and to protect her.”

The blood rose in my cheek, and I replied somewhat hastily, “ Were she as unprotected as a wild flower, do you think I would take advantage of her friendlessness ? You do me wrong, Garcias ; and by Heaven, were I so willed, it would be no fear of a revengeful Spaniard would stand in the way of my pursuit. But as I said, you do me wrong, great wrong ! ”

“ Be not angry, my noble Count,” replied the smuggler, with a calm smile, “ I know what youth and idleness may do with many a

one, even with the best dispositions : I warned you for your own good, and I am not a man who values any of this earth's empty bubbles so highly as not to say my mind when I am sure that it is right. But hear me still ;—humble as I am in station, I have one or two friends of a higher class, and I can give you a letter to the new Corregidor of Saragossa, who will easily obtain you rank in the Spanish armies, if you choose to employ yourself in war, which I know is the only occupation that you nobles of France can hold."

"Not to Saragossa," replied I ; "no, not to Saragossa—I cannot go there.—But you say the new Corregidor, what has become of the former one ?"

"He died this last month," replied Garcias ; "and a good man he was—God rest his soul !—He was much beloved by all classes of the people. He died, they say, of grief for the loss of his only child. But if you love not Saragossa, hark to another plan. I go to Lerida. You can accompany me as far as the town gates, but you must not go with me farther. You have heard of the fate of my wife's brother—

he must—he shall be saved, or I will light such a flame in Catalonia, as shall burn up these mercenary swordsmen by whom it is consumed, as by a flight of devastating locusts—ay, shall burn them up like stubble! What may come of my journey I know not—death perhaps to many; and, therefore, though you may go with me to Lerida, turn off before you enter the town, and make all speed to Barcelona, where you will find many a vessel ready to sail for France. You will easily find your way to Paris, where you may conceal yourself as well as if you were in Spain; and as you will land in a different part of the country from that where your appearance might prove dangerous to yourself, you will run no risk of interruption in your journey; at the same time you will be able more easily to communicate with your family and friends, and negotiate at the Court for your pardon.”

I did not hesitate in regard to which I should choose of the three plans that Garcias propounded. At once and without difficulty I fixed upon that course, which by carrying me directly to Paris, would give me a thousand

facilities that I could not possess in Spain. Though so far from the capital, of course a frequent communication existed between my native province and Paris, and I thus hoped soon to satisfy myself in regard to all the circumstances which had followed my flight from the Chateau de L'Orme; I should also be in the immediate neighbourhood of the Count de Soissons, and I doubted not, that by putting myself under his protection, I could easily obtain those letters of grace which would insure me from all the painful circumstances of a trial for murder; for although the severities which the Cardinal de Richelieu had exercised upon the nobles, in every case where they had laid themselves open to the blow of the law, showed evidently that my nobility would be no protection, yet, knowing little of the politics of the Court, I fancied that he would not reject the intercession of a prince of the blood royal. There is no reason why I should not acknowledge that, in these respects, I was most anxious about that life which I would have cast into the most hazardous circumstances—ay, even thrown away in any honourable manner; but to die the death

of a common felon, or even to be arraigned as one, was what I could not bear to dream of. There is something naturally more valuable to man than life itself—something more fearful than death; for though my whole mind was bent on saving myself from the fate that menaced me; at the same time, with every thought came the remembrance that it was Helen's brother I had slain—that she could never, never be mine; and I cursed the life I struggled for.

As soon as my determination was expressed, Garcias pressed me to hasten my movements, and as the little player had awoke, and seeing me about to depart, insisted on accompanying me, the next consideration became, how to mount him, so as to enable him to keep up with the quick pace at which we proposed to proceed. Horses, however, were plentiful in the village; and the smuggler, although it was now midnight, took upon himself to appropriate the beast of one of his companions, for which I left three gold pieces as payment. I was soon dressed, and Garcias having supplied me with some articles of apparel of which I stood in some need, we proceeded to the green, where we

found Francisco, who had brought the news of his kinsman's arrest, together with the horses, and four or five of Garcias' associates, armed like himself, and prepared to mount.

We were instantly in our saddles, and set off at all speed, greatly to the annoyance of poor little Achilles, who, not much accustomed to equestrian exercise, and perched upon the ridge of a tall strong horse, looked as if he was riding the Pyrenees, and riding them ill. I kept him close to myself, however, and contrived to maintain him in his seat, till such time as he had in some degree got shaken into the saddle, after which he began to feel himself more at his ease, and to play the good horseman.

Little conversation took place on the road, the mind of Garcias labouring evidently under a high degree of excitement, which he was afraid might break forth if he spoke, and I myself being far too much swallowed up in the selfishness of painful thoughts to care much about the schemes or wishes of others. I gathered, however, from the occasional questions which Garcias addressed to Francisco, and the replies he received, that the whole of

Catalonia was ripe for revolt ; that the sufferings of the people, and the outrages of the Castillian soldiery, had arrived at a point no longer to be endured ; and that the murmurs and inflammatory placards which had lately been much spoken of, were but the roarings of the volcano before an eruption. Several private meetings of the citizens and the peasantry had been held, Francisco observed, and at more than one of these, aid, arms, ammunition, money, and co-operation had been promised on the part of France. All was ready for revolt ; the pile was already laid whereon to sacrifice to the God of Liberty, and it wanted but some hand to apply the torch.

“ That hand shall be mine,” muttered Garcias ; “ that hand shall be mine if they change not their doings mightily,” and here the conversation again dropped.

For three hours we rode on in the darkness, by rough and narrow paths, which probably we might not have passed so safely had it been day, for we went on with that sort of fearlessness which is almost always sure to conduct one securely through the midst of danger.

Although I felt my horse make many a slip and many a flounder as we went along, I knew not the real state of the roads over which we passed, till I found him plunge up to his shoulders in a pit of water that lay in the midst. By spurring him on, however, I forced him up the other side, and shortly after the day broke, showing what might indeed be called by courtesy a road, but which seemed in truth but an old water-course, obstructed with large stones and deep holes, and in short a thousand degrees worse in every respect than any path we had followed through the gorges of the Pyrenees.

No feeling, I believe, is more consistently inconsistent than cowardice. Children shut their eyes in the dark to avoid seeing ghosts; and as long as my little companion Achilles could not exactly discover the dangers of the path, he proceeded very boldly, but no sooner did he perceive by the light of the dawn the holes, the rocks, and the channels which obstructed the road at every step, than he fell into the most ludicrous trepidation, and called down upon his head many an objurgation from Garcias for

hanging behind in the worse parts, floundering like a fish left in the shallows.

During the whole of our journey hitherto, we had passed neither house nor village as far as I could discover, and we still went on for about an hour before we came even to a solitary cottage, where Garcias drew in his rein to allow our horses a little refreshment.

Here he paced up and down before the door, seemingly anxious and impatient to proceed, knitting his brows and gnawing his lip with an air of deep and bitter meditation. I interrupted his musings, nevertheless, to inquire whether he could convey a few lines to their destination, which I had written to inform my father that I was, at least, in safety.

“To be sure,” replied he hastily, taking the letter out of my hand. “Did I not deliver the packet safely to Mademoiselle Arnault, at the chateau? and doubt not I will deliver yours too, if I be alive; and if I be dead,” he added with a smile, “I will send it.”

“What packet did you deliver to Mademoiselle Arnault?” demanded I, somewhat surprised, “I never heard of any packet.”

“Nay, I know not what it contained,” answered the smuggler; “it was brought to me by a friend at Jaca, and I know nothing farther than that I delivered it truly. That is all I have to do with it, and fully as much as any one else has.”

I turned upon my heel, again feeling the proud blood of the ancient noble rising angrily at the careless tone with which a peasant presumed to treat my inquiries; but the overpowering passions which, under the calm exterior of the Spaniard, were working silently but tremendously, like an earthquake preceded by a heavy calm, levelled in his eyes all the unsubstantial distinctions of rank. Nor did I, though struck by a breach of habitual respect, give above a thought to the manner of his speech; the matter of it soon occupied my whole mind, and for the rest of the journey I was as full of musing as the smuggler himself. A packet from Spain! —for Helen Arnault! What could it mean? She, who had no friends, no acquaintances beyond the circle of our own hall! A new flame was added to the fires already kindled in my bosom; I suppose that my mind was weak-

ened by all that I had lately suffered, for I cannot otherwise account for the wild, vague, jealous suspicions that took possession of me. But so it was—I was jealous! At other times my character was any thing but suspicious; but now I pondered over the circumstance which had just reached my knowledge, viewed it in a thousand different lights, regarded it in every aspect, and still the jaundiced medium of my own mind communicated to Helen's conduct a hue that, however extraordinary, it did not deserve.

With thoughts thus occupied, I scarcely perceived the length of the way, till, as we climbed a slight eminence, Garcias pulled in his rein, and looking forward, I perceived at no great distance a group of towers and steeples, announcing Lerida.

CHAPTER V.

THE irritable suspicions which, without his own knowledge, he had excited in my bosom, made me still regard the careless manner in which Garcias had treated my inquiries concerning the packet he had conveyed to Helen as matter of some offence. I forgot that he knew not my feelings on this subject, and I am afraid I made no allowance for his, excited and overwrought as they were. Notwithstanding the degree of irritation that I felt, however, I could not resist the frankness of manner with which he addressed me, when we came within sight of Lerida.

“ Here, Monsieur le Comte,” said he, “ you had better leave us. That path will take you into the high road to Barcelona, whither, if I

might advise, you would make all possible speed. My way is towards those towers, where my poor Catelina's brother lies in bonds. What may come of it, I do not know ; but either this night shall see him once more a freeman, or my head shall lie lower than it ever yet has done. Farewell, Monsieur le Comte ! I doubt not we shall meet again. Do not forget me till then : and ever believe that a warm and grateful heart, however rude, may dwell in the bosom even of a Spanish smuggler ; and that if this arm, or this sword, ever can serve you, you may command it. Are you too proud to accept that horse you ride, as a present from one who is under many a debt of gratitude to your house ?”

I hardly know what it was—for there was certainly very little in his words to change the angry feelings with which I had regarded him a moment before ; but the manner wherewith a thing is said, more than the thing itself, has often the power to let us into the dark council-chamber of man's bosom, and show us the motives which govern his actions. Gleaming through the very coldness of Garcias' demean-

our, I saw the wish to act towards me in the kindest and most grateful manner, only overpowered by the excitement of his own circumstances, and I instantly made those allowances which I should have done at first.

“ I will accept it, Garcias, with pleasure,” replied I, “ because I hope hereafter to repay it, with other debts to you, in a way that I have not now the means of doing.” A word or two more passed, and then bidding him adieu, I rode along the path he pointed out, followed by Achilles Lefranc, and soon reached the high road of which he had spoken. Here my poor little companion, who had hitherto smothered the torments of St. Bartholomew rather than risk being left behind, found it impossible to contain his expostulations any longer.

“ Monseigneur,” said he, in a tone which mingled the doleful and the theatrical in a very ludicrous degree; “ God knows that I am willing to follow on your steps to the last grain of my sand, to serve you with my best service to my last breath — but indeed ! indeed ! it must be on foot. Horseback becomes me not — I am already worn to the bone. So help me

Heaven ! as I would rather ride a grindstone by the hour together, than the stiff ridge of this hard-backed charger. Consider, my Lord ! consider, that my business has ever been on foot ; and that never but once before did I venture to cast my legs across that iron-spined beast called a horse. At least, in pity, give me half an hour's repose at the first cottage we pass, for I can get no farther."

The request of the poor little man was but reasonable, and after proceeding about half a league farther on our way, we stopped at a small sort of inn, where I suppose the carriers from Lerida ordinarily paused to water their horses. Here, with rest, and food, and wine, I strove to put Achilles into a fit state for proceeding on his journey ; but none of these applications seemed to touch the part affected, and the ludicrous stiffness that supervened when he had sat still for a few minutes, almost made me abandon the hope of going forward that day. After about an hour, however, a very powerful incentive to motion came in aid of my wishes, and soon induced Monsieur Achilles to start from his settle, and though

every joint seemed made of wood, and creaked in the moving, he nevertheless got to his horse even more quickly than myself. The cause of this revolution in his feelings was very simple, and consisted in nothing more than a sound, somewhat disagreeable to one of his peculiar temperaments.

The morning was clear and the wind high, coming in quick gusts from the side of Lerida, which, as near as I could judge, lay at the distance of two miles. It was not far enough, however, to prevent our hearing, after having rested, as I said, near an hour, the beating of a drum, mingled with the retreat call upon the trumpet. At this Achilles pricked up his ears, and the good dame on the horse shrugged up her shoulders, saying, "The soldiers again! They will never stop till they have taken our all!"

A pause then ensued; but the moment after an irregular fire of musketry made itself heard, and close again upon that, burst after burst, came the roaring of some heavy pieces of cannon. The good hostess, who was alone in the house, threw herself upon her knees before a

picture of St. Jago, and beseeched him so heartily for protection, that I could hardly divert her attention to receive payment for what ourselves and our horses had consumed.

In the mean while, Achilles, who seemed heartily to sympathize with the hostess, though his feelings urged him in another direction, had moved to his horse with a very white face ; and before I could mount, was already on the road. “ Let us make haste,” cried he, “ in God’s name ! To my ears, the noise of cannon is no way harmonious—Let us make haste, Monseigneur—I am sure I hear them coming—I do not even love the sound of a firelock—The only drum that should be tolerated is that of a charlatan ; for though he may kill as many people or more than a soldier, he does it quietly, promising to cure them all the while—Don’t you hear a noise behind us, Monseigneur ?—I am sure I hear a drum, of which sound the drum of my ear has all the jealousy of a rival :—*Morbleu !* what a roar of cannon !—That must have killed a great many people !”

Such broken exclamations did he continue to pour forth from time to time, as fast as the

jolts of his horse admitted, till we had placed a good many miles between us and Lerida. We were then obliged to slacken our pace, though we still heard occasionally the distant roaring of the cannon, proving incontestibly, that the struggle between the populace and the soldiery continued unabated.

Though from very different motives, I was as glad to avoid taking any part in the transactions which, I had reason to believe, were going on at Lerida, as little Achilles himself. I had gathered from the conversation of Francisco and Garcias, that the Catalonian peasantry had been instigated to revolt, in no slight degree, by secret agents of the French government; and I had but little inclination to be identified with schemes, which I could not look upon as highly honourable. To have been mistaken for one of these agents by the populace, would have placed me in a very embarrassing situation, unacquainted as I was with the designs and measures of my own government; and I well knew, that to disclaim a character with which the multitude chose to invest one, was the surest way to provoke, without con-

vincing them. I was therefore anxious on every account to reach Barcelona as speedily as possible, and to quit a country where no pleasing part was left me to play, before the first news of the insurrection caused an embargo to be laid upon the ports. But unfortunately, our horses had by this time become so jaded, that I was obliged to slacken my pace and proceed more slowly, lest they should fail us altogether.

About an hour more elapsed before we reached any place that could give shelter and rest for our horses; for I remarked here, as in the country near Saragossæ, though Catalonia is better peopled than many parts of Spain, that the towns and villages are sadly distant from one another, when compared with the overflowing population of France.

At length, however, the road wound up the side of a gentle hill, upon whose green and velvet top a group of old rough cork-trees, scarcely yet bearing a blush of tardy verdure upon their branches, were mingled with a number of earlier trees, all clothed in the thousand bright hues of spring. Amongst these, as we rode up, we could every now and then discern the straight lines of a cottage, diversifying the wild

and irregular masses of the foliage, and offering here and there a hard outline, cutting upon the clear background of the sky. Yet the whole was the more picturesque and beautiful for those very stiff lines of the buildings — whether from the contrast of the forms alone — or from the mingled associations called up in the mind, by the sight of man's habitations combined with the more graceful productions of simple nature — or from both, I know not. However there was an air of calm tranquillity in that little village and its group of trees, raised up upon the soft green hill, and standing clear and defined in the pure sunshiny sky, which formed a strange mild contrast with the distant roar that the wind bore in sullen gusts from Lerida. There is a latent moral in every look of nature's face, which—did man but study it—would prove a great corrector of the heart; and when I thought of the carnage and the crime which that far-off roar announced, the peaceful aspect of the scene before me made me shudder at the effect of excited human passions, and I hurried on upon my way to escape as fast as possible from the tumults which I doubted not were then in action at Lerida.

Knowing, as I did, that horses are cheap in this part of the country, I resolved to venture some portion of my remaining money, rather than delay my progress to Barcelona. Accordingly, as soon as I perceived the least appearance of hospitable walls, I asked poor little Achilles if he thought he could muster strength to continue his journey, representing to him that any delay might probably prevent us from quitting Spain, if it did not induce still more disagreeable consequences. A tear of pain and fatigue actually rose in the weary player's eye, as he abandoned the hope of repose with which the sight of the village had inspired him ; but the sound of the cannon, and the beating of the drum still rung in his ears, and he professed his willingness to go on, as long as he was able—to do any thing, in short, to get out of hearing of such sounds as the wind had borne from Lerida.

The village, however, was but a poor one, and on inquiring at the Posada whether we could exchange our horses for two fresh ones, offering at the same time a suitable repayment for the accommodation, I was informed that

no horse could be obtained in the place for love or money, except those employed in agriculture, which were not precisely suited to my purpose. Nothing remained then but to stay where we were, to give our horses food, and four hours rest, and to take what repose we could ourselves obtain.

So nearly balanced had been the wishes of poor little Achilles, between fear in the one scale, and fatigue in the other, that I do not believe he was at all sorry to hear that a halt was inevitable; and while I acted as the groom, and took care that every means was employed to renovate the vigour of our beasts, he cast himself upon a truckle-bed, and within two minutes was sound asleep. I followed his example as soon as I had provided for the renewal of our journey, for though well calculated to bear no ordinary portion of exercise, I was now considerably exhausted, having ridden more than thirty leagues that day, in addition to all that I had undergone before. My sleep, however, was feverish and interrupted, and before the four hours were concluded I was again upon my feet. It was about the hour that the Spaniards

generally devote to sleeping, during the great heat of the middle of the day, but on going to seek for my horse, I found the villagers collected in various groups at the different doors, all eagerly talking upon some subject that seemed to excite their feelings to the uttermost. I easily conceived that some news had reached them from Lerida, but judging it best to remain as innocent of all knowledge concerning any tumults that might have occurred as possible, I asked no questions, but proceeded towards the stable for the purpose of preparing for our departure, leaving my weary follower to enjoy his slumbers till the last moment.

Before I reached the door, however, a clattering of horses' hoofs made me turn my head, and I saw a Castillian trooper galloping as fast as his horse would bear him into the village. He was armed with a steel head-piece, cuirass, and gauntlets, and mounted on a horse which, though wounded and bloody, still bore him on stoutly. His offensive arms consisted of his long heavy sword, a case of large pistols, a dagger, and two musketoons, so that considering him as an opponent, his aspect would have been

somewhat formidable. As he came up, he glanced his eye ferociously over the various groups of peasantry, amongst whom two or three muskets were visible, but without taking farther notice of any one, he cut in between me and the stable-door, and springing to the ground, in a moment led out the horse which had borne my little follower thither, evidently with the purpose of transferring his heavy *démoupinque* saddle from his own wounded charger to its back.

This, however, did not at all suit my purposes, and laying my hand upon the halter, I told him the horse was mine, and that he must stand off. This information brought upon my head a torrent of Castillian abuse, and thrusting himself in between me and the horse, he struggled to make me quit my hold, raising his gauntletted hand as if to strike me in the face. He was a smaller man than myself in every respect, and also embarrassed with the weight of his arms, so that it was with ease I caught his wrist with one hand to prevent his striking me, while with the other I grasped the lower rim of his cuirass, and threw him back clanking upon the pave-

ment. In an instant, half a dozen young villagers sprang out of the houses, surrounded the prostrated trooper before he could make an attempt to rise, and would, I believe, have dispatched him with their long knives, had not I interfered to save his life.

“ *Viva la Francia ! Viva la Francia !* ” cried half a dozen voices at once. “ Let him rise ! let him rise ! The French Caballero commands it. Let him rise ! let him rise ! ”

Some of the Catalonians, however, were for opposing this piece of clemency, and evidently animated by the same spirit of hatred to the soldiery as their countrymen of Lerida, cried aloud to kill the tiger. “ How many of ours has he killed ! ” exclaimed they. “ How often has he plundered our houses, assaulted ourselves, insulted our women !—Let him die ! let him die ! ”

But the discussion had for a moment diverted their attention from their prisoner, and though one of the strongest villagers had his foot upon the soldier's corslet, he contrived suddenly to throw him off, and, springing up, to catch his wounded horse, which still stood nigh. Half a

dozen blows with musket-stocks and knives were now aimed at him in an instant, but leaping into the saddle, he spurred his horse through the crowd, and, saved by his corslet and morion from many a random stroke, galloped down the road like lightning.

At the distance of about a hundred yards, however, he turned in the saddle, and while his horse went on, aimed one of his musketoons calmly at the group assembled round me and fired. The ball whizzed close by me, and grazed the cheek of a villager near, leaving a long black wound along that side of his face. Fortunately for the fugitive, none of the muskets were loaded which graced the hands of those he left behind, otherwise his flight would have been but short. As it was, he departed undisturbed, and the whole of the group around turned to me, inquiring as of one who had some title to command them, what was to be done next? "Were they," they asked, "to collect and join the patriots at Lerida, or to march forward upon Barcelona, collecting what troops they could on the road, and at once attack the tyrants in their head-quarters?"

I of course disclaimed not only all right to direct them, but all knowledge of the subject, telling them that I had merely cast the soldier from me in defence of my own property, and that I was not aware what patriots they spoke of at Lerida, or what tyrants at Barcelona.

“What!” cried one of the young men, with a look divided between surprise and incredulity; “do you not know that the inhabitants of Lerida have risen, and cast off the yoke of the Castillian tyrants? Do you not know the glorious news, that they have beat the mercenary soldados of Castille through every street of the city wherever they dared to make a stand, till the few that escaped have shut themselves up in the citadel? Do you pretend not to know that they have well avenged the death of the poor youth that the bloody-minded slaughterers fired off last night from a cannon’s mouth? Pshaw! you know it well enough; and we know too, that it is with arms and ammunition from France, that all this has been done: so, ‘*Viva la Francia! Viva el Francés!*’”

It was in vain I protested my ignorance of the whole, they were determined to believe me an

agent of the French government, and nothing I could say had any effect in persuading them to the contrary. The only means I could devise for extricating myself from the unpleasant situation in which I was placed, without violating the truth, was to tell them, that I was going on myself to Barcelona, but that I thought the best thing they could do, would be to remain quiet till they heard more particularly from Lerida, taking care to be prepared for whatever event might occur.

They received this advice as if it had come from the Delphic oracle. "Yes, yes, he is right," cried one; "we will wait for orders from Lerida." "He will get to Barcelona before the Castillian now!" cried a second: "Quick! saddle the Cavalier's horse!" "Send us off a despatch as soon as all is safe at Barcelona," cried a third; but to this last I did not think fit to make any reply, as I had not the least intention of complying with the request.

All was soon ready to set out, but a sudden difficulty delayed me some time, which was, that when about to depart, I could no where

discover Monsieur Achilles Lefranc, whom I had left up-stairs sound asleep. To leave the poor little man alone, in a country the language of which was as unknown to him as Hebrew, was a piece of cruelty I could not think of committing. I was nevertheless nearly obliged to do so, for after looking for him in vain in the room where he had slept, and in every other place I could think of, with the assistance of half a dozen Spaniards, men, women, and children, he was drawn out from below the bed, where he had ensconced himself on hearing the sound of a musket, with the various shouts of the Spaniards in the street.

He seemed, however, in no degree ashamed of his cowardice. "I own it ! I own it !" cried he ; " I have nothing of Achilles about me but the name—I am vulnerable from top to toe : and so great a coward into the bargain, that I think the only wise thing my great namesake ever did, was in staying away so long from the fields of Troy, and the most foolish thing, in going back again at all."

CHAPTER VI.

THE horses of the smugglers were accustomed to hard service and therefore soon refreshed, so that when we again mounted, they wanted but little of the vigour with which they had at first set out. Still, however, twenty leagues lay between us and Barcelona, and since my unfortunate encounter with the trooper, the necessity became more urgent of arriving there with all speed. Nevertheless, it was in vain that we spurred on as rapidly as we could, even little Achilles exerting himself in proportion to his ideas of the danger; night fell upon our journey ere it was more than two-thirds finished, and as we could not arrive before the gates were shut, we were obliged to pause and await the return of day at a small town about ten miles

from Barcelona. Here, however, all was quiet, and I judged from the tranquillity that no news had yet reached this place from Lerida ; concluding also, that the soldado, whose wounded horse must have been soon exhausted, had not yet passed through. In this case there was still hope of arriving at the city before the insurrection was known, so that we might embark on board any vessel about to quit the port immediately, or even hire one of the light boats that are continually running across the Gulf of Lyons, between Barcelona and Marseilles. The next morning, an hour before day-break, we were again upon our journey, and arrived at the gates of the city not long after they were opened. A crowd of country people were going in, carrying fruit, and milk, and other articles of consumption to the town, and mingling amongst the horses and mules that bore these supplies, we endeavoured to pass in unnoticed. All proceeded very well for some way, till we passed the guard-house near the inner gate: in fact, we had proceeded a few paces beyond, when suddenly a couple of soldiers rushed out, half a dozen more followed, and I

was knocked off my horse by a violent blow on my head, which they chose to bestow upon me with a prospective view to prevent my resisting.

As soon as I was upon my feet again, the cause of this brutal conduct became evident, without question, as my good friend, the trooper from Lerida, was the first person that met my eyes. “Ha! ha!” cried he, coming before me, while the others pinioned my arms behind, and shaking his clenched hand in my face, with a grin of unutterable rage, “Ha! ha! we have thee now, and, by the soul of a Castillian, I would pluck thy heart out with my own hands, did not the Viceroy wish to examine thee himself. But never fear! before two hours be over, thou too, shalt have a flight from a cannon’s mouth!”

My situation was not a very agreeable one, but yet it was not one that impressed me with much fear. Indeed, it was never any circumstances of mere personal danger that much agitated me. Any thing that touched me through my affections, or through my imagination, ever had a great and visible effect upon my mind; but

to all which came in the simple form of bodily danger, I was, I believe, constitutionally callous.

While the soldiers were engaged in pinioning my arms with cords, which they drew so tight as almost to tear my flesh, some of their companions dismounted my trembling little companion, and as his excessive fear and non-resistant qualities were very evident, they did not think it necessary to decorate his wrists with the same sort of strict bracelets which they had adapted to mine, but simply led him along after me in a kind of procession towards the arsenal; whither, it seems, the Viceroy had removed from his own palace the night before, on the news of the insurrection at Lerida. The way was long, and I believe the brutal Castellians found a sort of pleasure in parading us through the various streets, and showing to the populace a new instance of the height to which the daring authority they assumed might be carried. Their insolence, however, seemed to me, even from the glances of the people as we passed, to be likely to receive a check sooner than they imagined. Not a Catalonian did we approach, but I recognized that flash in his

eye, which told of a burning and indignant heart within ; and though they suffered themselves to be shouldered by the licentious and ill-disciplined soldiers as we went along, it was with a bent brow and clenched teeth, which seemed to say, "The day of retribution is at hand !"

As we approached the Arsenal, I caught a glimpse of the wide, grand ocean, and there was something in the sight of its vast free waves, which seemed to reproach me with the bonds I suffered to rest upon my hands. I believe, involuntarily, I made an effort to burst them asunder, for one of the guard seeing some movement of my hands, struck me a violent blow with the pommel of his sword, exclaiming, "What, trying to escape ! Do so again, and I will send a ball through your brains !"

I was silent, giving him a glance of contempt, which only excited his laughter, and calling to his companions, he bade them look at the proud Frenchman. Patience was the only remedy ; and still maintaining my silence, though I own it cost me no small effort, I suffered them to lead me on, with many a taunt and insult, till

we arrived at the port and arsenal. Here I was dragged through two large courts, and conducted into a stone hall, where I was subjected, for near an hour, to the insolent jeering of the soldiery, while the Count de Saint Colomma, then Viceroy, finished his breakfast.

To all they could say, however, I answered nothing, which enraged them more than any thing I could have replied.

“Have you cut out his tongue, Hernan?” asked one of the soldiers. “No,” replied the other, “though he well deserves it, I spared it to speak to the Viceroy.”

“Slit it then, as they do to the magpies to make them speak,” said a third.

“Oh, the Viceroy will find him a tongue,” replied the first. “Mind you that sullen boor, that would not betray the conspiracy at Tarragona; and how the Count of Molir who then commanded our *tercia*, found a way to make him speak?”

“How was that?” demanded one of the others; “I served in the tenth *legero* then, and was not present.”

“Why, he made us tie him on a table,” an-

swered the first, “ and then fix a nice wet napkin over his face, pricking some holes in it, however, or it would have smothered him altogether, they say. As it was, every breath was like the gasp of a dying man, it was so hard to draw it through the cloth ! and one might see his fists clenching with the agony, and his feet drawn up every time we poured a fresh ladlefull of water over his face. Every now and then, Don Antonio told him to stretch out his hand when he would confess ; but he bore it stoutly, till his blood began to ooze out of his eyes and ears, and then he could not hold to it any longer, but stretched out his hand, and betrayed the whole story ; after which, the Conde was merciful, and had him hanged without more ado.”

It was fortunate for poor little Achilles, who sat beside me, that his knowledge of Spanish did not extend to the comprehension of a single word that passed, or this story would probably have bereft him of the little life he had left. Terror had already made him as silent as the grave—for which quality of silence he had never been very conspicuous before—and he

sat with his eyes staring and meaningless, his mouth half open, his feet drawn up under the bench, and his hands laid flat upon his knees, — the very image of folly struck dumb with fright. There was something so naturally small and unmeaning in his whole appearance, that the soldiers seemed to look upon him altogether as a cipher; and, in this respect, his insignificance for some time stood him in as good stead as the armour of his namesake; but at length, finding that they could draw nothing from me, my companion's look of terror caught the Castillians' attention, and they were proceeding to exercise their guard-room wit at the expense of poor little Achilles, when suddenly the noise of drums and trumpets was heard, announcing, as I found by their observations, that the Viceroy was retiring from the great hall to his own cabinet.

In a few minutes, a messenger arrived with orders for the officer of the guard to conduct the prisoners to his presence; but in the lax state of discipline which seemed to reign amongst the Castillian troops in Catalonia, it was not surprising that no officer could

be found. I was placed, however, between two soldiers, and with some attention to military form, led up the grand staircase towards the cabinet of the Viceroy, at the door of which I was detained till the messenger had announced my attendance.

The pause was not long; for shortly the door again opened, and I was told in a harsh tone to go in, which I instantly complied with, followed by little Achilles, while the soldiers and the Viceroy's officer remained without.

The scene which presented itself was very different from that which I had anticipated. The room was large and lofty, lighted by two high windows, commanding a view of the sea, and altogether possessing an air of cheerfulness rarely found in the interior of Spanish houses. The furniture was luxurious, even amidst a luxurious nation. Fine arras and tapestry, carpets of the richest figures, cushions covered with cloth of gold, tables and chairs inlaid with silver, and a thousand other rare and curious objects that I now forget, met the eye in every direction; while on the walls appeared some of the most exquisite paintings that the master-

hand of Velasquez ever produced. It put me strongly in mind of the saloon in the Marquis de St. Brie's *pavillon de chasse* ; but the lords of these two splendid chambers were as opposite, at least in appearance, as any two men could be.

Seated in an ivory chair, somewhat resembling in form the curule chair of the ancient Romans, appeared a short fat man, not unlike the renowned Governor of Barataria, as described by Cervantes. I mean in his figure ; the excessive rotundity of which was such, that the paunch of Sancho himself would have ill borne the comparison. His face, though full in proportion, had no coarseness in it. The skin was of a clear pale brown, and the features small, but rather handsome. The eye-brows were high, and strongly marked, the eyes large and calm, and the expression of the countenance, on the whole noble, and dignified, but not powerful. It offered lines of talent, it is true, but few of thought ; and there was a degree of sleepy listlessness in the whole air of the head, which to my mind spoke a luxurious and idle disposition. The dress of the Viceroy

—for such was the person before me—smacked somewhat of the habits which I mentally attributed to him. Instead of the stiff *fraise*, or raised ruff, round the neck, still almost universally worn in Spain, he had adopted the falling collar of lace, which left his neck and throat at full liberty. His *just au corps* of yellow silk, had doubtless caused the tailor some trouble to fashion it dextrously to the protuberance of his stomach ; but still many of the points of this were left open, showing a shirt of the finest lawn. His hat and plume, buttoned with a sapphire of immense value, lay upon a table before him ; and as I entered, he put it on for an instant, as representative of the sovereign, but immediately after, again laid it down, and left his head uncovered for the sake of the free air, which breathed sweetly in at one of the open windows, and fanned him as he leaned back on the cushions of his chair.

Behind the Viceroy stood his favourite negro slave, splendidly dressed in the Oriental costume, with a turban of gold muslin on his head, and bracelets of gold upon his naked arms. He was a tall, powerful man ; and there

was something noble and fine in the figure of the black, with his upright carriage, and the free bearing of every limb, that one looked for in vain in the idle listlessness of his lord. His distance from the Viceroy was but a step, so that he could lean over the chair and catch any remark which his lord might choose to address to him, in however low a tone it was made, and at the same time, he kept his hand resting upon the rich hilt of a long dagger ; which seemed to show that he was there as a sort of guard, as well as a servant, there being no one else in the room when we entered.

I advanced a few steps into the room, followed, as I have said, by Achilles alone, and paused at a small distance from the Viceroy, on a sign he made me with his hand, intimating that I had approached near enough. After considering me for a moment or two in silence, he addressed me in a sweet musical voice. “ I perceive, Sir,” said he, “ notwithstanding the disarray of your dress, and the dust and dirt with which you are covered, that you are originally a gentleman—I am seldom mistaken in such things. Is it not so ?”

“ In the present instance, your Excellence is perfectly right,” replied I ; “ and the only reason for my appearing before the Viceroy of Catalonia in such a deranged state of dress, is the brutal conduct of a party of soldiery, who seized upon me while travelling peacefully on the high road, and brought me here without allowing me even a moment’s repose.”

“ I thought I was right,” rejoined the Viceroy, somewhat raising his voice : “ but do you know, young Sir, that your being a gentleman greatly aggravates the crime of which you are guilty. The vulgar herd, brought up without that high sense of honour which a gentleman receives in his very birth, commit not half so great a crime when they lend themselves to base and mean actions, as a gentleman does, who sullices himself and his class with any thing dishonourable and wrong. From the mean what can be expected but meanness, and consequently the crime remains without aggravation ; but when the well born, and the well educated, derogate from their station, and mingle in base schemes, their punishment should be, not only that inflicted by society on those that trouble

its repose, but a separate punishment should be added for the breach of all the honourable ties imposed upon a gentleman—for the stigma they cast upon high birth—and from the certainty in their case that they fall into error with their eyes open—what say you, Sir?”

“I think your Excellence is perfectly right,” replied I, the Viceroy’s observations having given me time to lay down a line of conduct for myself; “I have always thought so, from the time I could reason for myself; and such have been always the principles instilled into my mind.”

“Then what excuse, Sir, have you,” demanded the Viceroy, rather surprised at the calmness with which I agreed to all his corollaries—“what excuse have you for meanly insinuating yourself into another country, and, by the basest arts, stirring up the people to sedition and revolt?”

“If I had done so, my Lord,” replied I, “I should be without excuse, and the severest punishment you could inflict would not be more than I merited. But I deny that I ever did so; and more! I can prove it impossible that

I should have done so, from the short space of time which I have been in Spain, not allowing opportunity for such a crime as has been imputed to me. This is the third day I have been in this country."

The Viceroy looked over his shoulder to his slave, who, stooping forward, listened, while his lord said, in a low tone, "You were right, Scipio—I am glad I looked to this myself—I am afraid I must exert myself, or these rude soldados will stir up the people to worse than even that of Lerida:" then turning to me he added in a louder voice, "I looked upon your guilt, Sir, as so evident a matter, that I did not think you would have had the boldness even to deny it; but as you do, it is but just that you hear the charge against you. It is this, that you, a subject of Louis the French King, have, together with many others, found your way into this province of Catalonia; and, as spies and traitors, have instigated the people to revolt against their liege Lord and Sovereign Philip the Fourth; in evidence of which, a Castillian trooper of the eleventh *tercia* deposes to having seen you with the rebels now in arms

at Lerida, and that, moreover, you overtook him on the road hither, and with other rebels at the village of Meila, would have slain him, had it not been for the goodness and speed of his horse. What can you reply to this?"

"Merely that it is false," replied I; "and if your Excellence will permit I will tell my tale against his, and leave it to your wisdom to find means of judging which is false and which is true."

"Proceed! proceed!" said the Viceroy, throwing himself back in his chair, seemingly tired with an exertion that was probably not usual with him, and had only been called up by the pressing circumstances of the times—circumstances which his own inactivity had suffered to become much more dangerous than he thought them even now. "Proceed, Sir; but do not make your tale a long one, for I have many important things to attend to."

"It shall be a very short one, my Lord," I replied: "my reason for quitting my own country, Bearn, was that I had slain a man who attempted to strike me—"

“A gentleman, or a serf?” demanded the Viceroy.

“He was in the *classe bourgeoise*,” replied I.

“You did very right,” said the Viceroy : “go on.”

“To escape the immediate consequences,” I continued, “I fled across the Pyrenees, guided by some Spanish smugglers, who conducted me to a village not far from Jacca, whence I intended to proceed to Barcelona, and thence embark for Marseilles. From Marseilles I intended to proceed to Paris, and there negotiate my pardon, so that I might eventually return to my own country in security.”

“But,” said the Viceroy, “what did you at Lerida? That town lies not in your road from Jacca to Barcelona.”

“My Lord, I never was at Lerida,” replied I ; “though I have been in Spain before, I never was within the gates of Lerida in my life.”

The Viceroy looked over his shoulder to his African confidant, saying in the same low tone with which he had formerly addressed him,

“Mark his words, Scipio ;” then turning to me, he asked, with rather a heedless air, “Then I am to believe, young Sir, that the whole tale of the soldier who accuses you is false, and that you and he never met till, for the purpose of plundering you, or something of the same nature, he seized you this morning at the city gates ?”

“Not so, my Lord,” I answered ; “far be it from me to say so, for I have a heavy charge myself to lay against that soldier. He overtook me yesterday on the high road, seized upon my attendant’s horse, and raised his hand to strike me for opposing him.”

“Good !” exclaimed the Viceroy. “Had you denied meeting him you were undone, for he gave last night a full description of your person. I now hear you with more confidence. Explain to me how, then, you happened to be on the road between Barcelona and Lerida, which is quite as much out of your way from Jacca, as Lerida itself.”

“Your Excellence will remember that I said I was guided by smugglers,” I replied ; “these smugglers were bound to Lerida ; but they

assured me that they would put me in the high road to Barcelona, after which I could not miss my way. They kept their word, and I proceeded safely and quietly on my journey, till arriving at a village which your Excellence calls, I think, Meila, I stopped for a few hours to rest my horses. Here I was overtaken by this soldier, who, without asking permission or making an excuse, seized upon my servant's horse, and on my opposing him raised his hand to strike me. I threw him back on the pavement, and the villagers rushing out of their houses, would, I believe, have murdered him, had I not interfered ; for which good office, no sooner was he on horseback than he fired his carbine at my head, the ball of which missed me, but wounded one of the peasants in the face."

The Viceroy paused for a moment while the African whispered to him over his shoulder, in so low a tone that the words did not reach me.

"Did you then not hear any report of a revolt at Lerida?" demanded the Viceroy at length.

"I did," replied I, "at Meila; and before

that I heard the sound of cannon and musketry from the side of Lerida.

“Can your attendant speak Spanish?”

“Not a word!”

“Does he understand it?”

“No!”

The Viceroy, while he spoke, looked steadfastly at Achilles, whose face happily betrayed nothing but the most confirmative stupidity of aspect; he then called him forward in French, and bade him detail what had occurred during the course of the foregoing day. The little player had by this time, in some degree, recovered his intellects, and hearing the mild tone in which the Viceroy had hitherto questioned me, as well as the calmness with which he addressed him himself, his *penchant* for bombast was excited by the solemnity of the occasion, and the presence of a representative of royalty, and he poured forth a stupendous piece of eloquence, such as he thought the ears of a Viceroy required.

“May it please your sublime Highness,” said he, “the following is a true account of what occurred to my noble and estimable Lord,

and to myself, during our woeful peregrinations of yesterday ; and if it is not the exact and simple verity, may all the stars of the golden firmament fall upon my head and crush me into atoms !”

The Viceroy looked back to the African and laughed, but the slave, whose Oriental imagination was perhaps more in harmony with the tumidity of little Achilles's style, than the more refined taste of his lord, opened his large eyes, and seemed to think it very fine indeed. Neither of them interrupted him, however, and the player proceeded.

“ Shortly after Aurora had drawn back the curtains of the Sun, and Phœbus himself jumped out of bed and began running up the arch of heaven, the illicit dealers, who had been hitherto our guides, our guards, and our suttlers, all in one, left us, to proceed themselves I know not where. We were now upon the broad and substantial causeway which leads from the far-famed city of Lerida—as I am given to understand, for I never was there—to this renowned metropolis of Catalonia, when, I being much

fatigued with the unwonted extension of my legs across the back of my equine quadrupede, my noble and considerate lord permitted me to stop and repose my weary limbs at a small pot-house by the road-side. Suddenly, after we had been there about an hour, loud roared the cannon and quick beat the drum ; and my Lord not loving tumults amongst the people, as he said, and I not loving tumults amongst the cannon, we got upon horseback, and rode on till our horses could go no farther. Truly, I was thankful that their weariness came to back my own, or verily, I believe, that my Lord, whose thighs must be made of cast-iron, would not have left a bit of skin upon me, by riding on till night. However, we stopped ; and, by the blessing of God, I lay down to take what the people of this land call a *siesta*, but what I call a nap ; when, after having lain in the arms of Somnus for about half an hour, (four hours, he should have said,) I was startled by the tremendous sound of a musket, and incontinent, crept under the bed, from whence I was dragged out shortly after by my master, mounted

on the awful pinnacle of my horse's back, and compelled to ride on to another village, where we slept in quiet until day this morning. After that, we proceeded to these hospitable walls, where a generous soldier rushed forth upon us, and invited us in with a pressing courtesy which was not to be resisted. He bestowed upon my Lord a long piece of cord, which your sublime Majesty may observe upon his wrists. Me he decorated not in the same manner, but they took care of both our horses and ——

“Hold!” said the Viceroy, “I have heard enough. You said,” continued he, turning to me, “that you had been in Spain before. Where did you then reside, and to whom were you known?”

“I resided at Saragossa,” replied I, “and was known to the Corregidor, and to the Chevalier de Montenero.”

“The Conde de Montenero!” said the Viceroy. “Good! I expect him here this very day, or to-morrow at the farthest. If he witness in your favour, your history needs no other con-

firmation ; for though a foreigner, all Spain knows his honour."

" A foreigner !" exclaimed I ; " Is he not a Spaniard ?"

" Certainly not," answered the Viceroy, " knew you not that ? But to speak of yourself ; mark me, young Sir, you are safe for the present, for your story bears the air of truth ; but woe to you if you have deceived me, for you shall die under tortures such as you never dreamed of ; and to show you that in such things I will no longer be trifled with between these cut-throat soldiers and the factious peasantry, I will instantly order your accuser to have the strappado till his back be flayed. By the Mother of heaven ! I will no longer have my repose troubled at every hour with the rapacity of these base soldados, and the turbulence of the still baser serfs." And the full countenance of the Count took on an air of stern determination, which I had not before imagined that it could assume. " Scipio," continued he to the Negro, " see that these two be placed in security, where they may be well treated, but cannot

escape; bid my Secretary, when he arrives from the palace, take both their names in writing, and note down their separate stories from their own mouths. Henceforth, I will investigate each case to the most minute particular, and, be it peasant or be it soldier that commits a crime, he shall find that I can be a Draco, and write my laws in blood."

His resolution unfortunately came somewhat too late, for his indolence and inactivity had permitted the growth of a spirit that no measures could now quell. The hatred between the soldiery and the people had been nourished by the incessant outrages which the former had been suffered to commit under the lax government of the Count de St. Colonna; and, now that the populace had drawn the sword to avenge themselves, they were not likely to sheath it till they had done so effectually.

When he had finished speaking, the Viceroy threw himself back in his chair, fatigued with the unwonted exertion he had made, and waving his hand, signed to us to withdraw, with which, as may be supposed, we were not long in com-

plying. The African followed us; and being again placed between two soldiers, we were conducted to a small low-roofed room, which filled up the vacancy between the two principal floors in that body of the building. The soldier who had been my accuser, did not fail to follow, addressing many a triumphant jest upon our situation to the Negro. The slave affected to laugh at them all heartily, but was, I believe, amusing himself with very different thoughts; for the moment we were safely lodged in the room he had chosen, he beckoned our good friend the soldier forward, and made him untie my hands. As he did so, an impulse I could scarcely resist almost made me seize him and dash his head against the floor; but the Negro avenged me more fully, for he instantly commanded the other soldiers, with a tone of authority they dared not disobey, to bind the delinquent with the same cord, and taking him down into the court, to give him fifty blows of the strappado, and farther, to keep him in strict confinement till the Viceroy's farther pleasure was known.

“ Ha, ha, ha !” cried he to the soldier with a grin, that showed every milk-white tooth in his head ; “ Ha, ha, ha ! why do you not laugh now ?” And having placed a guard at our door. he left us.

CHAPTER VII.

THE chamber in which we were now placed was not an unpleasant one, nor was it ill-furnished. It had probably been heretofore occupied by some of the inferior officers on duty at the arsenal ; and there were still to be seen hanging up above the bed, a head-piece and pair of gauntlets of steel, and an unloaded musketoon. The walls, which were entirely destitute of hangings, were, however, ornamented with sundry curious carvings, the occupation possibly of many an idle hour, representing battles, and tournaments, and bull-fights, wherein neither perspective nor anatomy had been very much consulted ; and mingled with these rare designs, appeared various ciphers and initials,

together with Christian names, both male and female, in great profusion.

The windows of the apartment were little better than loop-holes, with a strong iron bar down the centre. They possessed, however, a view over the whole of the lower part of the city; and being situated in the south-western side of the principal *corps de logis* of the arsenal, faced the inner gate communicating with the town, and commanded both the inner and outer wall with a part of the counterscarp and glacis.

On approaching one of these scanty apertures, to reconnoitre the objects which surrounded the place of our detention, I heard a party of soldiers conversing under the windows, and stopping the babbling of little Achilles by a motion of my hand, I listened to gain any information that I could, considering my present situation as one of the very few in which eaves-dropping was not only justifiable but necessary.

They were merely speaking, however, of some military movements which had just taken place, by order of the Viceroy, for quelling the insur-

rection at Lerida; and they did not at all scruple to censure their commander in their discourse, for detaching so great a force from Barcelona, at a moment it might be required to overawe the city.

This conversation soon ceased, and after some coarse vituperation of the Catalonians, they separated, and I heard no more. Notwithstanding their departure, I continued to stand at the window, as if I were still listening, in order to collect and arrange my own thoughts uninterrupted by the merciless tongue of my attendant, who now having recovered his speech, of which fright had deprived him for a time, seemed resolved to make up by redoubled loquacity for the time he had been obliged to waste in silence.

I had, in truth, much to think of. The whole circumstances which had lately happened to me, as well as my present situation, would have afforded sufficient matter for reflection; but nevertheless the news which I had heard from the Viceroy concerning the Chevalier de Montencro, engaged my thoughts perhaps more than all the rest, and made me look upon the

chance which brought me to Barcelona, rather than to any other Spanish town, and even my detention there, as rather fortunate than otherwise, notwithstanding all the unpleasant circumstances by which it had been accompanied.

I doubted not for an instant, that, however the Chevalier might be prepossessed against me in some respects, he would instantly do me justice in the matter of the present charge, and show the Viceroy that it was impossible I could be guilty ; which none could know better than himself. At the same time, the knowledge that I had now obtained of his not being Spanish by birth, freed me at once from the difficulty under which I had before laboured, and left me at liberty to exculpate myself from every circumstance which had before appeared suspicious in his eyes, without violating my promise to the unfortunate Corregidor of Saragossa. After considering these points for a minute or two, I applied myself to calculate how long it would take him to arrive at Barcelona, supposing that he travelled with all speed from the place where I last saw him ; and I judged, that passing by Bagneres and

Venasque, he might have already arrived, as I doubted not that when he left Lourdes, he had directed his course immediately towards Spain.

Nothing did I long for more ardently than his coming; not alone from the desire of obtaining my liberation, but because I longed to re-establish myself in his good opinion—I longed to be near one that I esteemed and loved—to confide in him all my thoughts, my feelings, my sorrows, my regrets,—to tell him my own tale—to ask for consolation, and to seek for advice: and certainly, never, never did I feel so much as at that moment the desolate solitariness of man, when, with none to aid him, he stands in the midst of sorrow and misfortune by himself.

With all his follies and his weaknesses, I will own, I had even clung to the society of the little player, merely because it was something human that seemed to attach itself to me; and while he was near, I did not appear so totally abandoned to myself and my evil fate; but when I thought of the coming of the Chevalier, of clearing myself from all suspicions, regaining his regard, and walking by his counsel, my

heart was lightened of half its load, and I felt as if I had again entered within the magic circle of hope, that had long been shut against me.

While I was thus reflecting, the door of the chamber opened, and the Viceroy's favourite Negro slave entered, followed by a servant, loaded with various kinds of viands, and a flask of wine. The servant put his burden down on the table, and withdrew; but the Negro remained, and shutting the door, invited me in a civil tone to partake of the provisions which his Excellence had ordered to be brought me. "My lord the Viceroy," said he, "has given me in charge to see that you be hospitably treated, and I have pleasure in the task, young Sir; for I hope, through your means, to rouse my master to a just sense of the oppression which these poor Catalonians suffer from the unruly and insolent soldiers."

There was something in this speech so different from what might be expected in a Negro slave and a favourite, that I did him the wrong of suspecting that he wished to entrap me into some avowal of opinions contrary to the Viceroy's government; and I therefore replied,

“ You must know more of the subject than I do ; I have been but three days in Catalonia, and therefore have had but little opportunity of judging whether the people be oppressed or not, even if I had any interest in the matter.”

“ Interest ! Spoke like a white man !” muttered the black to himself. “ Ah, young Sir, young Sir ! If you had known oppression as I have, you would find an *interest* in every one you saw oppressed.”

“ I should have imagined,” replied I, still doubting him, though I own most unworthily, “ that your situation was as happy a one as well might be ; and that your service on his Excellence the Viceroy was not very oppressive ?”

He laid his jet black finger upon the rich golden bracelet that surrounded his arm. “ Think you,” asked he, “ that that chain, because it happens to be gold, does not weigh as heavily as if it were of iron ? It does—I tell you, Frenchman, it does. True, I am slave to the best of masters, the noblest of Lords—true, if I were free this moment, I would dedicate my life to serve him—But still I am a

slave—still I have been torn from my home, and my native land—still I have been injured—wronged—oppressed; and every one I see injured, every one I see wronged, becomes my fellow and my brother. But you understand not that?”

“ I do, my good friend, more than you think,” replied I, convinced by the earnestness of his manner that what he said was genuine.

“ Whether you do or not,” said he, “ there is one principle on which you *will* understand me. You can fancy that I love my benefactor. I love him; but I also know his faults. He is of a soft and idle humour, so that his virtues, like jewels cast upon a quicksand, are lost, unknown, and swallowed up. His idleness is a disease of the body, not a defect of the mind—though the mind suffers for the fault of the body—and so much does he value repose, that nothing seems to him of sufficient importance to embitter its sweetness. Fearless as a lion of death or of danger, he is a very coward when opposed to trouble and fatigue; he is just, honourable, and wise, but this invincible apathy of nature has brought him to the brink of a

precipice, over which he would sooner fall than make one strong effort to save himself. For two years he has governed Catalonia, and during those two all the reports of the brute soldiery have been believed—few of the complaints of the injured peasants have reached him. Those few have been through me, for his guards and his officers, who all join in the pillage of the people, take care to cut off from him every other source of information. Thus the soldiers have heaped wrong upon wrong, till the people will bear no more: till at Lerida, as Tarragona—over half the country, in short, they are already in revolt. Barcelona still remains quiet; and, by the exertion of proper authority—by showing the Catalonians that the Viceroy will do equal justice between them and the soldiery, that in future he will be the defender of their rights and liberties—the province—his government—perhaps even his life, may be saved. For this object, when the news reached him last night of the insurrection at Lerida, and, at the same time, the charge against you, I persuaded him to examine you himself, without the presence of his officers or his council.

You answered wisely, and saved yourself. When next he shall examine you, do more—answer nobly, and save him, and perhaps a whole people! Tell him the oppression you have seen, tell him the murmurs you have heard; aid me to stir him up to exertion, and you may, if it be not too late, avert the evils that are gathering round so thickly!”

“I will willingly do what you wish,” replied I, “but I fear, unless he can send one obnoxious regiment after another out of Catalonia, and supply their place with troops whose discipline is more strict, and who have not yet made themselves so hated by the populace, that your Viceroy will do but little to allay this fermentation among the people.”

The Negro shook his head. “They will never be changed,” said he, “while Olivarez, the Count-Duke, lives as both Spain and the King. Why did he send them here at first? He knew them to be the worst-disciplined, the most cruel, turbulent, rapacious troops that all Spain contained; but he wished to punish the Catalonians for holding a junta on one of his demands, and he sent them these locusts as a

scourge. However, I have your promise. Before night the Count will send for you again ; he will ask you what rumours you heard—how the Castilian troops were looked upon by the people,—and other questions to the same effect. Conceal nothing ! Let him hear the truth from *your* lips at least. Will you do so ?”

“ I will !” replied I, decidedly.

“ Then fare you well !” said the Negro, “ and fall to your meat with the consciousness of doing what is noble and right.” And thus saying he left the chamber.

“ Good faith ! Monseigneur,” said little Achilles, who had already settled upon the basket of provisions, and was making considerable progress through the contents, “ I could not resist this charming sight had you been the King, and my master into the bargain. I must have fallen to. Hunger, like love, levels all conditions.”

“ You did right, my good Achilles,” replied I ; “ but hold a moment, I must join the party ;” and sitting down with my little attendant, I aided him to conclude what he had so happily begun. The wine flask succeeded, and

we neither of us spared it, proceeding to the bottom with very equal steps, for though, as his lord, Achilles always conceded to me two draughts for his one, he found means to compensate for this forbearance, by making his draught twice as long as mine. Indeed, when the bottle reached his mouth, (for the Negro had supplied us with no cup,) the matter became hopeless, so long did he point it at the sky.

During one of these deep draughts, which occupied him so entirely that he neither heard nor saw any thing else, a distant shout reached my ear, and then all was silent. There was something ominous in the sound, for it contained a very different tone from that which bursts from a crowd on any occasion of mirth or rejoicing. It was a cry somewhat mingled of horror and hate; at least my fancy lent it such a character. At the same time I heard the soldiers in the court below running out to the gates, as if they had been disturbed by the same sound, and went to inquire into its cause. Little Achilles had not heard it, so deeply was he engaged in the worship of the purple god,

and the moment he dismissed the bottle, he recommenced his attack upon a fine piece of mountain-mutton, which still remained in the basket ; but in a moment or two his attention was called by a renewal of the shouts, and by the various exclamations of the soldiers in the court, from which we gathered that, most unhappily, some new outrage had been offered to the people, who, encouraged probably by the news of a revolt at Lerida, had resisted, and were even then engaged with the soldiery.

“ Let them fight it out,” cried my companion, encouraged by the good viands, and still better wine of the Viceroy, “ Let them fight it out ! By my great namesake’s immortal deeds, methinks I could push a pike against one of those base soldados myself. Pray heaven the peasants cut them up into mincemeat ! But while you look out of the window, Monseigneur, I will lie down, and, in imitation of that most wise animal, an ox, will ruminate for some short while after my dinner.”

As he said, I had placed myself at the window, and while he cast himself on the bed, and I believe fell asleep, I continued to watch the

various streets within the range of my sight, to discover, if I could, the event of the tumult, the shouts and cries of which were still to be heard, varying in distance and direction, as if the crowds from which they proceeded were rapidly changing their place. After a moment or two, some musket-shots were heard mingling with the outcry, and then a whole platoon. A louder shout than ever succeeded, and then again a deep silence. In the mean while, several officers came running at all speed to the arsenal; and in a few minutes, two or three small bodies of troops marched out, proceeding up a long street, of which I had a view almost in its whole length. About half way up, the soldiers defiled down another street to the right, and I lost sight of them. The shouts, however, still continued, rising and falling, with occasional discharges of musketry; but in general the noise seemed to me farther off than it had been at first. Shortly it began to come rapidly near, growing louder and louder; and straining my eyes in the direction in which the tumult seemed to lie, I beheld a party of the

populace driven across the long street I have mentioned by a body of pikemen.

The Catalonians were evidently fighting desperately; but the superior skill of the troops prevailed, and the undisciplined mob was borne back at the point of the pike, notwithstanding an effort to make a stand at the crossing of the streets.

This first success of the military, however, did not absolutely infer that their ascendancy would be permanent. The tumult was but begun, and far from being a momentary effervescence of popular feeling, which beginning with a few, is only increased by the accession of idlers and vagabonds, this was the pouring forth of long-suppressed indignation—the uprising of a whole people to work retribution on the heads of their oppressors, and every moment might be expected to bring fresh combatants, excited by the thirst of vengeance, and animated by the hope of liberty.

All was now bustle and activity in the arsenal. The gates were shut, the soldiers under arms, the officers called together, the walls manned; and, from the court below, the stirring

sounds of military preparation rose up to the windows at which I stood, telling that the pressing danger of the circumstances had at length roused the Viceroy from his idle mood, and that he was now taking all the means which a good officer might, to put down the insurrection that his negligence had suffered to break out. From time to time, I caught the calm full tones of his voice, giving a number of orders and directions—now ordering parties of soldiers to issue forth and support their comrades—commanding at the same time that they should advance up the several streets, which bore upon the arsenal, taking especial care that their retreat was not cut off, and that a continual communication should be kept up—pointing out to the inferior officers where to establish posts, so as to best guard their flanks, and avoid the dangers of advancing through the streets of the city, where every house might be considered as an enemy's fort; and finally directing that in such and such conjunctures, certain flags should be raised on the steeples of the various churches, thus establishing a particular code of signals for the occasion.

In the mean while the tumult in the city increased, the firing became more continuous, the bells of the churches mingled their clang with the rest, and the struggle was evidently growing more and more fierce, as fresh combatants poured in on either party. At length I saw an officer riding down the opposite street at full speed, and dashing into the arsenal, the gates of which opened to give him admission, he seemed to approach the Viceroy, whose voice I instantly heard, demanding, "Well, Don Ferdinand, where are the cavalry? why have you not brought up the men-at-arms?"

"Because it was impossible," replied the officer; "the rebels, your Excellence, have set fire to the stables — not a horse would move, even after Don Antonio Molina had dispersed the traitors that did it.—Not ten horses have been saved. What is to be done, my Lord?"

"Return instantly," answered the Viceroy promptly, "collect your men-at-arms, — bid them fight on foot for the honour of Castile — for the safety of the province — for their own lives. Marshal them in two bodies. Let one march, by the Plaza Nueva, down to the

port, and the other by the Calle de la Cruz to the Lerida-gate."

"I am sorry to say, the Lerida-gate is in the possession of the rebels," replied the officer. "A large body of peasants, well armed and mounted, attacked it and drove in the soldiers half an hour ago. They come from Lerida itself, as we learn by the shouts of the others."

"The more need to march on it instantly," replied the Viceroy. "See! The flag is up on the Church of the Assumption! Don Francisco is there, with part of the second tercia. Divide as I have said — send your brother down with one body to the port — with the other, join Don Francisco, at the Church of the Assumption; take the two brass cannon from the Barrio Nuevo, and march upon the gate of Lerida. Drive back the rebels, or die!"

The Viceroy's orders were given like lightning, and turning his horse, the officer rode away with equal speed to execute them. I marked him as he dashed through the gates of the arsenal, and a more soldier-like man I never saw. He galloped fast over the drawbridge, and through the second gate, crossed the open

space between the arsenal and the houses of the town, and darted up the street by which he had come, when suddenly a flash and some smoke broke from the window of a house as he passed ; I saw him reel in the saddle, catch at his horse's mane, and fall headlong to the ground ; while the charger, freed from his load, ran wildly up the street, till he was out of sight.

The sentinel on the counterscarp had seen the officer's fall, and instantly passed the news to the Viceroy. " Pedro Marona !" cried the Count promptly : " Quick ! mount, and bear the same orders to Don Antonio Molina. Take the Calle de la Paz. Quick ! One way or another, we lose our most precious moments. Don Ferdinando should have seen his corslet was better tempered. However, let half a dozen men be sent out to bring him in, perhaps he may not yet be dead."

The gates of the arsenal were thrown open accordingly, and a small party carrying a board to bring home the body, issued out ; but they had scarcely proceeded half-way to the spot where the officer had fallen, when the sound of

the tumult, the firing, the cheers, the cries, the screams, mingled in one terrific roar, rolled nearer and nearer. A single soldier then appeared in full flight in the long street on which my eyes were fixed ; another followed, and another. A shout louder than all the rest rang up to the sky ; and rolling, and rushing, like the billows of a troubled ocean, came pouring down the street a large body of the Castilian soldiery, urged on by an immense mass of armed peasantry, with whom the first rank of the Castilians was mingled.

Though some of the soldiers were still fighting man to man with the C atalonians, the mass were evidently flying as fast as the nature of the circumstances would permit, crushing and pressing over each other ; and many more must have been trampled to death by the feet of their comrades than fell by the swords of their enemies. In the mean while, the pursuers, the greater part of whom were on horseback, continued spurring their horses into the disorderly mass of the fugitives, hewing them down on every side with the most remorseless vengeance ; while from the houses on each hand a still more

dreadful and less noble sort of warfare was carried on against the flying soldiery. Scarce a house but one or two of its windows began to flash with musketry, raining a tremendous shower of balls upon the heads of the unfortunate Castilians, who, jammed up in the small space of a narrow street, had no room either to avoid their own fate or avenge their fellows.

Just then, however, the pursuers received a momentary check from the cannon of the arsenal, some of which being placed sufficiently high for the balls to fall amidst the mass of peasantry, without taking effect upon the nearer body of the flying soldiers, began to operate as a diversion in favour of the fugitives. The very sound caused several of the horsemen to halt. At that moment, my eye fell upon the figure of Garcias the smuggler, at the head of the peasantry, cheering them on; and by his gestures, appearing to tell them, that those who would escape the cannon-balls must close upon those for whose safety they were fired; that now was the moment to make themselves masters of the arsenal; and that if they would but follow

close, they would force their way in with the flying soldiers.

So animated, so vehement was his gesticulation, that there hardly needed words to render his wishes comprehensible. The panic, however, though but momentary, allowed sufficient time for greater part of the soldiers to throw themselves into the arsenal. Some, indeed, being again mingled with the peasantry, were shut out, and slaughtered to a man; the rest prepared to make good the very defensible post they now possessed, knowing well that *mercy* was a word they had themselves blotted out from the language of their enemies.

In the mean while, my little companion Achilles had evinced much more courage than I had anticipated; whether it was that he found, or rather fancied, greater security in the walls of the arsenal; or whether it was that necessity produced the same change in his nature, that being in a corner is said to effect upon a cat; or whether the quantity of wine which he had drunk had conveyed with itself an equal portion of valour, I do not know; but

certain it is, that he lay quite quiet for the greater part of the time, without attempting to creep under the bed, and only took the precaution of wrapping the bolster round his head to deaden the sound of the cannon. Once he even rose, and approaching the other window, stood upon tiptoes to take a momentary glance at what was proceeding without. The scene he beheld, however, was no way encouraging, and he instantly retreated to the bed, and settled himself once more comfortably amongst the clothes, after having drained the few last drops of wine that remained in the flask.

It may easily be supposed, that the Viceroy was not particularly anxious to spare the houses of a town which had shown itself so generally inimical, and, consequently, every cannon which could be brought to bear upon the point where the insurgents were principally collected, was kept in constant activity, and the dreadful havoc which they made, began to be evident both amongst the insurgents, and upon the houses round about.

Garcias, however, who was now evidently acting as commander-in-chief of the populace,

was prompt to remedy all the difficulties of his situation, and animating and encouraging the peasantry by his voice, his gestures, and his example, he kept alive the spirit which had hitherto carried them on to such great deeds.

It is not to be imagined that any regular fascines should have been prepared by the peasantry for the assault of the arsenal, but they had with them six small pieces of cannon which they had taken, and which they hastily brought against the gate.

The murderous fire, however, both of cannon and musketry, kept up upon the only point where they could have any effect, would have prevented the possibility of working them. had not the fire of the arsenal itself, by demolishing the wall of one of the houses opposite, discovered the inside of a wool warehouse. Fascines were no longer wanting; the immense woolpacks were instantly brought forward and arranged, by the orders of Garcias, into as complete a traverse as could have been desired, supported from behind by the stones of the streets, which the insurgents threw up with pick-axes and spades. Their position being

now much more secure, a movement took place amongst the people ; and, while Garcias with a considerable body continued to ply the principal gate with his battery, two large masses of the insurgents moved off on either hand ; and, presently after, re-appeared at the entrance of the various streets which surrounded the arsenal, rolling before them their woolpacks, which put them in comparative security.

It was evident that a general attack was soon to be expected ; and, exerting himself with an activity of which I had not thought him capable, the Viceroy put himself forward in every situation of danger. From time to time I caught a glimpse of his figure, toiling, commanding, assisting, and slackening not in his activity, though the marks of excessive fatigue were sufficiently evident in his countenance.

Of course, the gate could not long resist the continued fire of the insurgent's battery, and as soon as it gave way, upon some signal which I did not perceive, the whole mass of the peasantry poured forth from every street, and advancing steadily under a most tremendous fire from the guns of the arsenal, ran up the

glacis and easily effected a lodgement on the counterscarp with the woolpacks.

The moment was one of excessive interest, and I was gazing from the window, marking with anxiety every turn of a scene that possessed all the sublime of horror and danger and excited passion, when I heard a step behind me, and a cry from my little friend Achilles, which instantly made me turn my head.

I had but time to see the Spanish soldier who had accused me to the Viceroy, with his broadsword raised over my head, and to spring aside, when the blow fell with such force, as to dash a piece out of the solid masonry of the window frame.

"By the eyes of St. Jeronimo!" cried the man, "thou shalt not escape me—though I die this day, thou shalt go half an hour before me!"—and darting forward he raised his weapon to aim another blow at my head.

Unarmed as I was, my only chance was to rush in upon him, and, getting within his guard, render the struggle one of mere personal strength; and making a feint, as if I would leap aside again, I took advantage of a move-

ment of his hand, and cast myself into his chest with my full force.

He gave way sooner than I had expected, and we both went down ; but somehow, though in general a good wrestler, certainly infinitely stronger than my adversary, and though at first also I was uppermost, I soon lost my advantage. I believe it was that in attempting to place my knee on his breast, it slipped from off his corslet, flinging me forward, so that my balance being lost, he easily cast me off and set his own knee upon me. His sword he had let fall, but he drew his long poniard, and threw back his arm to plunge it into my bosom ; when suddenly he received a tremendous blow on the side of the head, which dashed him prostrate on the floor ; and to my surprise and astonishment, I saw little Achilles in the person of my deliverer.

My pressing danger had communicated to his bosom a spark of generous courage which he had never before felt, and, seizing the unloaded musketoon, he had come behind my adversary and dealt him the blow which had proved my salvation. Nor did he stop here ;

for what with joy and excitement at this success, and fear that our enemy should recover from the stupefaction which the blow had caused, he continued to belabour his head and face with strokes of the musketoon, with a silent vehemence and rapidity which not all my remonstrances could stop. Even after the man was evidently dead, he continued to reiterate blow upon blow ; sometimes pausing and looking at him with eyes in which horror, and fear, and excitement, were all visible ; and then adding another, and another stroke, as I have often seen a dog after he has killed a rat, or any other noisome animal, every now and then start back and look at him, and then give it another bite, and another, till he has left it scarce a vestige of its original form.

Seizing his arm, however, during one of these pauses, I begged him to cease ; and would have fain called his attention by thanking him for his timely aid ; but the little man could not yet overcome the idea that his enemy might still get up and take vengeance on him for the unheard-of daring which he had exercised.

“ Let me kill him ! Monseigneur ! Let me kill him !” cried he, “ Don’t you see he moves ? look, look !”

And, with straining eyes, he struggled forward to make quite sure that his victory wanted nothing of completion, by adding another blow to those he had already given.

“ He will never move again, Achilles,” replied I ; “ spare your blows, for you bestow them on a dead man, and well has he merited his fate ——”

“ Had we not better tie his hands, at least ?” cried the little player ; “ He lies still enough too — Only think of my having killed a man — I shall be a brave man for all the rest of my life. — But if I had not killed him, you would have been lying there as still as he is.”

I expressed my gratitude as fully as I could, but objected to the proposal of tying a dead man’s hands. No doubt, indeed, could remain of his being no longer in a state to endanger any one ; for having no helmet on at the time he entered, the very first blow of the musketoon must have nearly stunned him, and several of the after-ones had driven in his skull in various

places. It is probable, that having been kept in confinement by the order of the Viceroy, he had been liberated at the moment the danger became pressing, and that, instead of presenting himself where he might do his duty, his first care had been to seek the means of gratifying his revenge, no doubt attributing to me the punishment he had received. Such an event as my death, in the confusion and danger of the circumstances, he most probably imagined, would pass unnoticed; and no one, at all events, could prove that it had been committed by his hands. Whether his comrade, who had been placed as sentinel at the door where we were confined, had been removed for the more active defence of the place, or whether he had connived at the entrance of the assassin, I know not; but at all events, if he was there, he must have been an accomplice, and consequently would not have betrayed his fellow.

Such, however, was a strange fate for a daring and ferocious man—to fall by the hands of one of the meekest cowards that ever crept quietly through existence! and yet I have often remarked that bad actions, the most boldly

undertaken, and the best designed, often — nay, most frequently, fall back upon the head of their projectors, repelled from their intended course by something petty, unexpected, or despised.

CHAPTER VIII.

WHILE this was taking place within, the tumult without had increased a thousand fold; and the din of cries, and screams, and blows, and groans mingled in one wild shriek of human passion, hellish as if they rose from Phlegæon. But to my surprise, the roar of the cannon no longer drowned the rest, and looking again from the window, I saw all the outward defences in the hands of the populace. The fortifications of the arsenal had only been completed, so far as regarded the mere external works; but even had they been as perfect as human ingenuity could have devised, the small number of soldiers which were now within the gates, would never have sufficed to defend so great a space from a multitude like that of the

insurgents. At the moment that I returned to my loop-hole, the peasantry were pouring on every side into the inner court; and the Viceroy, with not more than a hundred Castilians, was endeavouring in vain to repel them. If ever what are commonly called prodigies of valour were really wrought, that unhappy nobleman certainly did perform them, fighting in the very front, and making good even the open court of the arsenal against the immense body of populace which attacked it, for nearly a quarter of an hour.

At length, mere fatigue from such unwonted exertions seemed to overcome him, and, in making a blow at one of the peasants, he fell upon his knees. A dozen hands were raised to despatch him; but at the sight of his danger the Castilians rallied, and closing in, saved him from the fury of the people; while his faithful Negro, catching him in his arms, bore him into the body of the building.

Though certainly but ill-disposed towards the soldiery, there was something in the chivalrous valour which the Viceroy had displayed in these last scenes, combined with the lenity

he had shown to myself when brought before him, which created an interest in my bosom that I will own greatly divided my wishes for the success of the oppressed Catalonians. The idea, too, entered my mind, that, by exerting my influence with Garcias, whom I still saw in the front of the insurgents, I might obtain for the Viceroy some terms of capitulation.

Calling to little Achilles to follow me, then, I snatched up the sword of the dead Castilian, and proceeding to the door, which, as I had expected, was now open, I ran out into the long corridor, and thence began to search for the staircase that led down to the gate, by which the Viceroy must have entered. On every side, however, I heard the cries of the soldiery, who had now retreated into the building, and were proceeding to take every measure for its defence to the utmost. Several times these cries misled me, and it was not till I had followed many a turning and winding that I arrived at the head of a staircase, half way down which I beheld the Viceroy, sitting on one of the steps, evidently totally exhausted ;

while Scipio the negro, kneeling on a lower step, offered him a cup of wine and seemed pressing him to drink.

At the sound of my steps the slave started up and laid his hand upon his dagger, but seeing me he gave a melancholy glance towards his lord, and again begged him to take some refreshment. Unused to all exertion, and enormously weighty, the excessive toil to which the Viceroy had subjected himself had left him no powers of any kind, and he sat as I have described, with his eyes shut, his hand leaning on the step, and his head fallen heavily forward on his chest, without seeming to notice any thing that was passing around him. It was in vain that I made the proposal to parley with Garcias; he replied nothing; and I was again repeating it, hoping by reiteration to make him attend to what I said, when one of his officers came running down from above.

“My Lord,” cried he, “the galleys answer the signal, and from the observatory I see the boats putting off. If your Excellence makes haste, you will get to the shore as they do, and will be safe.”

The Viceroy raised his head, “ At all events I will try,” said he ; “ they cannot say that I have abandoned my post while it was tenable. Let the soldiers take torches.”

The officer flew to give the necessary directions, and taking the cup from the Negro, the Viceroy drank a small quantity of the wine, after which he turned to me : “ I am glad you are here,” said he ; “ they talk of my escape—I do not think I can effect it ; but whether I live or die, Sir Frenchman, report me aright to the world. Now, if you would come with us, follow me—but you might stay with safety—they would not injure *you*.”

I determined, however, to accompany him, at least as far as the boats they talked of, though I knew not how they intended to attempt their escape, surrounded as the arsenal was by the hostile populace. I felt convinced, however, that I should be in greater personal safety in the open streets than shut up in the arsenal, where the first troop of the enraged peasantry who broke their way in might very possibly murder me, without at all inquiring whether I was there as a prisoner or not. At the same

time I fancied, that in case of the Viceroy being overtaken, if Garcias was at the head of the pursuers, I should have some influence in checking the bloodshed that was likely to follow.

While these thoughts passed through my brain, half a dozen voices from below were heard exclaiming, "The torches are lighted, my Lord! the torches are lighted!" and the Viceroy rising, began to descend, leaning on the Negro. I followed with Achilles, and, as we passed through the great hall, sufficient signs of the enemies' progress were visible to make us hasten our flight. The immense iron door was trembling and shivering under the continual and incessant blows of axes and crows, with which it was plied by the people, in spite of a fire of musketry that a party of the most determined of the soldiery was keeping up through the loopholes of the ground story and from the windows above. A great number of the soldiers, whose valour was secondary to their discretion, had already fled down a winding staircase, the mouth of which stood open at the farther end of the hall, with an immense stone trap-door thrown back, which, when down,

doubtless concealed all traces of the passage below. When we approached it, only two or three troopers remained at the mouth holding torches to light the Viceroy as he descended.

“Don Jose,” said the Viceroy, in a faint voice, addressing the officer who commanded the company which still kept up the firing from the windows: “call your men together, let them follow me to the galleys—but take care, when you descend, to shut down the stone door over the mouth of the stairs—lock it and bar it as you know how;—and make haste.”

“I will but roll these barrels of powder to the door, my lord,” replied the officer, “lay a train between them, and place a minute match by way of a spigot, and then will join your Excellence with my trusty iron hearts, who are picking out the fattest rebels from the windows. Should need be, we will cover your retreat, and as we have often tasted your bounty, will die in your defence.”

In dangerous circumstances there is much magic in a fearless tone; and Don Jose spoke of death in so careless a manner, that I could not help thinking some of the soldiers who had been

most eager to light the Viceroy, were somewhat ashamed of their cowardly civility. About forty of the bravest soldiers in the garrison, who remained with the officer who had spoken, would indeed have rendered the Viceroy's escape to the boats secure, but Don Jose was prevented from fulfilling his design. We descended the stairs as fast as the Viceroy could go; and, at the end of about a hundred steps, entered a long excavated passage leading from the arsenal to the sea shore, cut through the earth and rock for nearly half a mile, and lined throughout with masonry. At the farther extremity of this were just disappearing, as we descended, the torches of the other soldiers who had taken the first mention of flight as an order to put themselves in security, and had consequently led the way with great expedition. In a moment or two after—by what accident it happened I know not—an explosion took place that shook the earth on which we stood, and roared through the cavern as if the world were riven with the shock.

“God of Heaven! they have blown themselves up!” cried the Viceroy pausing, but the

Negro hurried him on, and we soon reached the sands under the cliffs to the left of the city. To the cold chilliness of the vault through which we had hitherto proceeded, now succeeded the burning heat of a cloudless sun in Spain. It was but Spring, but no one knows what some Spring days are at Barcelona, except those who have experienced them ; and by the pale cheek, haggard eye, and staggering pace of the Viceroy, I evidently saw that if the boats were far off, he would never be able to reach them. We saw them, however, pulling towards the shore about three-quarters of a mile farther up, and the very sight was gladdening. Four or five soldiers remained, as I have said, with their commander, and lighted us along the gallery ; but the moment they were in the open air, the view of the boats, towards which their companions who had gone on before were now crowding, was too much for the constancy of most of them, and without leave or orders, all but two ran forward to join the rest.

The tide was out ; and stretching along the margin of the sea, a smooth dry sand offered a firm and pleasant footing, but a multitude of

large black rocks, strewed irregularly about upon the shore, obliged us to make a variety of turns and circuits, doubling the actual distance we were from the boats. The cries and shouts from the place of the late combat burst upon our ears the moment we had issued from the passage, and sped us on with greater rapidity. Seeing that he could hardly proceed, I took the left arm of the Viceroy, while his faithful Negro supported him on the right, and hurried him towards the boats; but the moment after, another shout burst upon our ear. It was nearer—far nearer than the rest, and turning my head, I beheld a body of the peasantry pursuing us, and arrived at about the same distance from us that we were from the boats.

The Viceroy heard it also, and easily interpreted its meaning. “I can go no farther,” said he; “but I can die here as well as a few paces or a few years beyond;” and he made a faint effort to draw his sword.

“Yet a little farther, my Lord, yet a little farther,” cried the African; “they are a long way off still—we are nearing the boats—See, the

head boat is steering towards us ! Yet a little farther, for the love of Heaven !”

The unfortunate Viceroy staggered on for a few paces more, when his weariness again overcame him, his lips turned livid, his eyes closed, and he fell fainting upon the sand. Running down as fast as I could to the sea, I filled two of the large shells that I found with water ; and carrying them back, dashed the contents on his face ; but it was in vain ; and I went back again for more, when on turning round, I saw a fresh party of the insurgents coming down a sloping piece of ground that broke the height close by. It would have been base to have abandoned him at such a moment, and I returned to his side with all speed. The first of the peasantry were already within a few paces, and their brows were still knit and their eyes still flashing with the ferocious excitement of all the deeds they had done during the course of that terrible morning. As they rushed on, I saw Garcias a step or two behind, and called to him loudly in French to come forward and protect the Viceroy, assuring him that he had wished the

people well, and even had been the means of saving my life.

The smuggler made no reply, but starting forward, knocked aside the point of a gun that one of the peasants had levelled at my head, and catching me firmly by the arm, held me with his gigantic strength, while the people rushed on upon their victim.

The Negro strode across his master and drew his dagger—one of the insurgents instantly rushed upon him, and fell dead at his feet. Another succeeded, when the dagger broke upon his ribs—the noble slave cast it from him, and throwing himself prostrate on the body of his master, died with him, under an hundred wounds.

CHAPTER IX.

“BEWARE how you stand between a lion and his prey,” said Garcias, releasing my arm ; “and let me tell you, Sir Count, it were a thousand times easier to tear his food from the hungry jaws of the wild beast, than to save from the fury of this oppressed people the patron and chief of all their oppressors.”

“You are wrong, Garcias ! you are wrong !” replied I ; “since I have been a prisoner here at the arsenal, I have had full opportunity to see and judge whether he *wished* to be your oppressor or not ; and on my honour, no man would more willingly have done you justice and punished those who injured you, had he been allowed to hear the evils that were committed under the name of his authority.”

“That, then, was his crime !” replied Garcias.

“ He *should* have heard—he *should* have known the wrongs and miseries of the people he governed. All in life depends on situation, and in his, indolence was a crime—a crime which has been deeply, but not too deeply, expiated. Believe me, Count Louis, that kings and governors, who suffer injustice to be committed, deserve and will ever meet a more tragic fall than those even who commit it themselves.”

“ But see!” cried I, “ they are going to mutilate the bodies; for Heaven’s sake, stop them, and let them not show themselves utterly savages.”

“ What matters it?” asked he, “ the heads they are about to strike off will never feel the indignity; but speak to them if you will, and try whether you can persuade them from their wrath.—Ho! stand back, my friends,” he continued, addressing the people, who even glared upon him with somewhat of fierceness in their look, as he interrupted their bloody occupation, “ hear what this noble Frenchman has to say to you, and respect him, for he is my friend.”

“ *Viva Garcias!*” shouted the people. “ *Viva el Librador!*” and standing forward I endeavoured, as well as I could, to calm their excited

“My good friends,” said I, “you all know me to be sincerely the well-wisher of Catalonia and the cause of freedom. Many, who are here present, saw me dragged through the streets of Barcelona, no later than this morning, tied like a slave, and insulted, as I went, by the brutal soldiery, your enemies and mine, for no other cause but that I was a Frenchman, and that the French are friendly to the Catalonians. I therefore have good cause to triumph in your success, and to participate in your resentment : but there is a bound, my friends, within which resentment should always be confined, to mark it as grand, as noble, as worthy of a great and generous people. It is just, it is right, to punish the offender, to smite the oppressor, and to crush him with his own wrong.”

A loud shout announced that this was the point where the angry flame still burned most furiously.

“But,” continued I, “is it right, is it just, is it noble, to insult the inanimate clay after the spirit has departed? Is it dignified? is it grand? is it worthy of a great and free people like the Catalonians?”

“No, no,” cried one or two voices amongst the better class of the insurgents, “do not insult the body.”

“No, indeed!” proceeded I, “it is beneath a people who have done such great and noble deeds. The moment you attempt to degrade that corpse by any unbecoming act, what was an act of justice, becomes an act of barbarity; and, instead of looking on that unhappy man as a sacrifice to justice, all civilized people must regard him as the victim of revenge. You, my friend—you,” I continued, addressing the man who had been kneeling on the body for the purpose of cutting off the head with a long girdle knife, and who still glared at it like a wolf disappointed of its prey—“you, I am sure, would be the last to sully the justice of the Catalonians with a stain of cruelty. A few hours ago, this unhappy man possessed riches, and power, and friends, and kindred—all the warm blessings of human existence—you have taken them from him—all! Is not that punishment enough? You have sent him to the presence of God to answer for his sins—let God then judge him; and reverencing the sanctity of that tribunal to which you yourselves have referred him, take up the frail remains of earth, and laying them side by side with the faithful, the noble, the generous-hearted slave, whose self-devotion we all admire, and whose death

we all regret, bear them silently to the high church, and deliver them into the hands of some holy priest, to pray that God may pardon him in Heaven the faults which you have punished upon earth. Thus shall you show, my friend, that it is justice you seek, not cruelty. Thus shall your friends esteem you, your enemies fear you, and your deeds of this day descend as an example to nations yet unborn."

In a multitude there is always a latent degree of good feeling amongst the majority which, in moments of tumult and action, is overborne by the more violent and excitable passions of human nature; but once get the people to pause and listen, and mingle with your speech a few of those talismanic words, which compel the evil spirit, vanity, to the side of good, and every better sentiment thus encouraged, will come forth and often lead them to the greatest and noblest actions. When I began to address the Catalonians, all I could obtain was bare attention, but, as they heard their own deeds spoken of and commended, they gathered round me, pressing one another for the purpose of hearing. I gained more boldness as I found myself listened to, and seeming

to take it for granted that they possessed the feelings I sought to instill into them, I gradually brought them to the sentiments I wished.

The great majority received with shouts the proposal of carrying the bodies to the cathedral, and the rest dared not oppose the opinion of the many.

I had fancied Garcias cold—nay, savage, from the check he had laid upon me at first, but the energy with which he pressed the execution of my proposal, before the fickle multitude had time again to change, cleared him in my opinion, and we prepared to return to the city, as friends. At this moment, however, I perceived the loss of my little companion, Achilles, and mentioned the circumstance to Garcias, who gave orders to search for him; but the poor player was to be found nowhere, and I began to entertain serious apprehensions, that in case of his having fled, he might be massacred by the first body of the insurgents he encountered.

Garcias instantly took advantage of this possibility, making it an excuse for positively prohibiting all promiscuous slaughter; and so great seemed his influence with the people, from the very extraordinary services he had rendered to their cause, that I doubted not his orders

would be received as a law. The news of the Viceroy having been taken, had by this time collected the great body of the insurgents round us; and on a proposal from Garcias, they proceeded, in somewhat a tumultuous manner, to elect a council of twelve, who were to have a supreme command of the army, as they called themselves, and to possess the power of life and death over all prisoners who might hereafter be taken.

Garcias, as might naturally be expected, was appointed president of this council, and commander-in-chief of the army; and as a representative of the town of Lerida, the Alcayde of that city was chosen, he having joined the insurgents from the first breaking out of the insurrection. Added to these were several popular and respectable citizens of Barcelona, with a wealthy merchant of Taragona; and much to my surprise, I was myself eventually proposed to the people, and my name received with a shout, which, from having opposed the fury of the populace in its course, I had not at all expected. Though, whoever has once guided a popular assembly even against their inclinations, becomes in some degree a favourite with them; this was not, I believe, the sole cause of the

confidence they reposed in me. The idea of assistance from France was their great support in their present enterprize, and without staying to enquire whether he possessed any official character, the very knowledge that they had a Frenchman in their councils, gave them a sort of confidence in themselves, which their ill-cemented union required not a little. Involved as I now was in the insurrection, I did not refuse the office they put upon me, and my reason was very simple: I hoped to do good, and to act as a check upon men whose passions were still excited.

When all this was concluded, a sort of bier was formed of pikes bound together, and the bodies of the Viceroy and his slave placed thereon. Six stout Barcelonese porters raised it from the ground and marched on: the insurrectionary council followed next; and then the populace, armed with a thousand varied sort of weapons; and thus in half-triumphant, half-funereal procession, we returned towards the city.

As we went, Garcias, with a rapidity of thought and clearness of arrangement which eminently fitted him for a leader in such great, but irregular, enterprises as that in which he was now engaged, sketched out to me his plans

for organizing the people, maintaining the civil government of the province, repelling any attempt to reimpose the yoke which the nation had cast off, raising funds for the use of the common weal, and gradually restoring that order and tranquillity which had of course been lost in the tumultuous scenes of the last two days.

He took care, also, to dispatch messengers in every direction through the town, bearing strict commands to all the various posts of the insurgents, that no more blood should be spilt without form of trial; and two of the members of the council also, were detached on a mission to the corregidor and other civil officers of the city, requiring their union with the great body of the Catalonian people, for the purpose of maintaining and cementing the liberties which they had that day reconquered. His wise conduct, in both respects, produced the most beneficial effects. The news of the cessation of bloodshed spread like lightning through the city, and induced many of the Catalonian nobility, who previously had not known whether the insurrection was a mere democratical outrage, or a really patriotic effort for the good of all, to come forth from their houses and give

their hearty concurrence to an enterprise, whose leaders showed so much moderation. At the gate of the cathedral also, we were met by the corregidor and all the chief officers of the city, accompanied by a large *posse* of Alguazils and halberdiers attached to their official station. These officers, as a body, declared their willingness to co-operate with the liberators of their country; for though they had received their offices from the King of Spain, they were Catalonians before they were Spaniards. This annunciation produced a shout from the people, which gave notice to the chapter of the cathedral of our approach, and coming forth in their rich robes, they received with the solemn chant of the church the bodies of the unhappy Viceroy and his slave. When the corpses had been laid before the high altar, the bishop himself came forward to the portal, and addressed the people, who heard him with reverential attention; while the leaders of the revolution which had just been effected, clothed indeed in wild and various vestments, but dignified in air and look, by the consciousness of great deeds, spread on one side of the gate, and the nobility and high municipal officers ranged themselves on

the other, leaving room for the populace to catch the words of the prelate.

“ My children,” said the old man, “ you have this day done great and fearful deeds ; and sure I am, that the motives which impelled ye thereunto, were such as ye could in conscience acknowledge and maintain. I myself can witness, how long ye endured oppressions and injuries, almost beyond the patience of mortal men—your children and brothers slaughtered, your wives and sisters insulted, and God’s altars overturned and profaned. May Heaven forgive ye for the blood ye have spilt, but as some of the innocent *must* have perished with the guilty, I enjoin you all, to keep to-morrow as a strict and rigorous fast, to confess you of your sins, and to receive absolution ; after which, may God bless and prosper you, and strengthen you in the right.”

The good bishop’s speech was received with shouts by the populace, who took it for granted that it proceeded entirely from love and affection towards them, though individually, I could not help thinking that there was a slight touch of fear in the business, as the prelate was well aware that in pulling down one house, the neighbouring

ones are very often injured; and perhaps he might think, that in overthrowing the edifice of Castilian dominion in Catalonia, the populace might shake the power of the church also. I know not whether I did him wrong, but of course I did not give the benefit of my thoughts to any of the rest; and when he had done, we took our departure from the cathedral, and proceeded towards the Viceroy's palace, which Garcias named for his head quarters.

As we went, we were encountered by a large body of the insurgents who had just concluded the pillage of a house in the same street, belonging to the Marquis de Villafranca, general of the galleys. They were of the lowest order of the populace, and we heard that a good deal of blood had been shed, and various enormities committed by them, which as yet, it would have been dangerous to punish. Advancing with loud shouts, they hailed us as their brother patriots, from which appellation the better part of the insurgents were somewhat inclined to shrink, receiving their fraternal salutations with much the shy air of a *parvenu* when visited by his poor relations.

I must say, however, that never did a more brutal rabble meet my sight. Amongst other

instances of their savage ignorance was one, which at the same time strongly displayed the spirit of the vulgar Catalonians. In rifling the Marquis de Villafranca's house, they had found, amongst other rare and curious articles which that officer took great delight in collecting, a small bronze figure, representing a negro, the body of which contained a clock. At the same time, the works were so contrived, as to make the eyes of the figure move, and when the mob surrounded the table on which it was placed, the little negro continued to roll his eyes round and round upon them, in so bold and menacing a manner, that the whole multitude were frightened, and dared not approach ! From his love of study, and search for every thing that was curious and antique, it had long been rumoured, amongst the lower orders, that the Marquis had addicted himself to magic, and they instantly fixed upon this ingenious piece of clockwork as his familiar demon. Under this impression, it was long before any one dared to touch it, as, after having signed it with the cross, and even held up a crucifix before it, it still continued to roll its eyes upon them with most sacrilegious obstinacy. At length, one more courageous than the rest, dashed to

pieces the glass which covered it, and seizing hold of the unfortunate clock, tied it to the end of a pike, and carried it out into the street. When we encountered them, the first thing we beheld was this bronze figure, borne above the heads of the people. They instantly exhibited it to us with great triumph, assuring us that they had caught the Marquis de Villafranca's familiar, and were about to carry it to the chief Inquisitor, that it might be consigned to its proper place, with all convenient dispatch. For my own part I could scarcely refrain from laughing, and as Garcias seemed to take the matter quite seriously, I explained to him in French that the supposed familiar was nothing but a piece of mechanism, ingenious enough, but not at all uncommon. He cut me short, however, praised the crowd for their zeal, and bade them by all means carry the demon to the Inquisitor, and then disperse for the night.

“Reasoning with such a mob as that,” said he as he went on, “is as vain as talking to the winds or the seas. The only way of managing them, is to leave them in possession of all their prejudices and follies; but to turn those prejudices and follies to the best purposes one can. You see that cart, Monsieur de L’Orme.

with its great clumsy wheels, which are not half so good as the light wheels that we have in Navarre and Arragon, but if I wanted to send a load quickly to the port, I would not think of sitting down to take off those wheels—to make lighter, and to put them on, but would, of course, make use of the cart as I found it. Thus, when you want to guide a multitude never attempt to give them new ideas, but take advantage of those which they have already got.”

We had now arrived at the viceregal palace : and, leaving Garcias to make what arrangements he thought proper for the accommodation of the five hundred men which he had brought with him from Lerida, and for organizing the people of Barcelona into a sort of irregular militia, the insurrectionary council repaired to the great hall, and with the Corregidor and Alcayde, sat till midnight, deciding on the fate of all those persons that the various parties of the armed multitude thought fit to bring before it. The task was somewhat a severe one, for every person that did not know another, brought him before the council, if he could, and if he could not he was himself brought. Their zeal, however, in this respect began to slacken as night fell, and it was only the more resolute and exasperated

part of the insurgents that continued their perquisitions for Castilians, and other suspected persons, patrolling the streets of the city in bodies of tens and twelves, and making every one they met give an account of himself and his occupations.

As it was the sincere wish of every member of the council to allay the popular fury, and stop the effusion of blood, various extraordinary shifts were we obliged to make for the purpose of saving many of the poor wretches that were brought before us, from the more inveterate and blood-thirsty of the insurgents. The part we had to play was certainly a very difficult one, for we were surrounded by men over whom we had not the check of long established control, and whose inflamed passions and long smothered revenge, was not half quenched with all the gore that had already drenched the streets of Barcelona. Blood was still their cry, and they contrived to find out almost every individual who had been in any way connected with the Castilian government of the province, and drag him before us. Our very principal object was to check their indiscriminate cruelty, and yet, if we refused in every instance to gratify them in their revenge, it was likely we should

annul our own authority, and that the populace would betake themselves again to the massacres which we sought to prevent.

Under these circumstances, upon the plea of weariness and want of time to examine thoroughly, we committed greater part of the unfortunate wretches, whom we were called to notice, to the government prison, sending off the most violent of the insurgents to renew their patrol in the streets, upon the pretence of fearing that during their absence some of the more obnoxious persons should escape. The prison we took care to surround with a strong guard of the men from Lerida, the major part of whom had served in the old Catalonian militia, and were consequently in a very good state of subordination, looking up also to Garcias almost as a god, from his having led them on to two such signal victories as that which they had achieved that day, and the morning of the day before.

At midnight the Corregidor rose, and addressing me by the name which Garcias had given me, the Count de L'Orme, requested me to lodge at his house, as most probably I had not apartments prepared in the city. I willingly accepted his hospitality, and, escorted by a

strong body of Alguazils, we proceeded to his dwelling, where a very handsome chamber was assigned to me, and I was preparing to go to rest after a day of such excessive excitement and fatigue, when I was interrupted by some one knocking at the door. I bade him come in, and to my great surprise I beheld my little attendant, Achilles, completely dressed in Spanish costume ; though, to own the truth, his *haut de chausse* came a good way below his knees, and his *just-au-corps* hung with rather a slovenly air about his haunches. His hat, too, which was ornamented with a high plume, fell so far over his forehead as to cover his eyebrows, which were themselves none of the highest ; and, in short, his whole suit seemed as if it intended to eat him up.

“ Ah, my dearly beloved lord and master !” cried the little player, “ thank God, that when I celebrate my *jèbrua* in memory of my deceased friends, I shall not have to call upon your name among the number ; though I little thought that you would get out of the hands of that dreadful multitude so safely as you have done.”

I welcomed my little attendant as his merits deserved ; and congratulating him on his fine

new feathers, asked him how he had contrived to escape the fury of the people, without even having been brought before the council.

“Why, to speak sooth, I escaped but narrowly,” answered little Achilles; “and but that my lord loves not the high and tragic style, I could tell my tale like Corneille and Rotrou---av, and make it full, full of horrors. But to keep to the lowly walk in which it is your will to chain my soaring spirit; when I saw that poor unhappy Viceroy faint, and a great many folks coming along the shore with lances, and muskets, and knives, and a great many other things, which are occasionally used for worse purposes than to eat one’s dinner, I looked out for a place where my meditations were not likely to be interrupted by the clash of cold iron, and seeing none such upon the shore, I betook me to a smooth piece of green turf that came slanting down from the hill to the beach, and there I began to run faster than I ever plied my legs on an upland before. The exercise I found very pleasant, and God knows how long I should have continued it, especially as some of the folks on the beach, seeing me run, pointed me out with their muskets, that their friends might admire my agility, and I began to hear something

whistle by my head every now and then in a very encouraging manner : but just when I got to the top of the hill—plump—I came upon a mob twice as big as the other. Instantly they seized me, and asked me a thousand questions, which I could not answer, for I did not understand one of them ; when suddenly one fellow got hold of me, threw me down, and—blessed be the sound from henceforth for ever, Amen!—though he held a knife to my throat, and stretched out his arm in a very unbecoming manner, he at the same time muttered to himself, ‘*Diantre !*’ between his teeth, in a way that none but a true-born Frenchman could have done it—‘*Diantre !*’ cried he, grasping my throat. ‘*Diantre !*’ replied I, in the same tone. ‘*Diantre !*’ exclaimed he, letting go his hold, and opening his mouth wider than before. ‘*Diantre !*’ repeated I, devilish glad to get rid of him. ‘*Foutre !* the fellow mocks me!’ cried he, drawing back his knife to run it into my gizzard. ‘Ah!’ exclaimed I, ‘if your poor dear father could see you now about to murder me, what would he say?’ ‘*Diable !*’ cried he, ‘are you a Frenchman?’ ‘Certainly,’ answered I, ‘nothing less, though a

little one.' 'And do you know my father?' exclaimed he, catching me in his arms, and hugging me very fraternally. 'Not a whit,' answered I; 'I wish I did, for then possibly you would for his sake show me how I can save my throat from these rude ruffians.' 'That I will, for our country's sake,' answered he, and helping me up, he told some half dozen dogged-looking fellows, who had remained to help him to stick me, a long story, full of Spanish *oses* and *anoses*, which seemed to satisfy them very well, for instead of running me through, they hugged me till I was nearly strangled, crying out, *Viva la Francia!* all the while.

"After this, my companion, who is the Corregidor's French cook, gave me a green feather, which has ever since proved the best feather in my cap; for this green, it seems, is the colour of the Catalonians, and since I put it in my hat, every one I have met has made me a low bow. The cook and myself swore eternal amity on the field of battle, and instead of going on to murder the Viceroy, by which nothing was to be got, we went back, and joined the good folks who had just broken into the palace of the General of the Galleys. There had been a little

assassination done before we came up, but the General himself had got off on board his ships, and the multitude were taking care of his goods and chattels for him. I entered into their sentiments with a fellow feeling, which is quite surprising, and while great part of them were standing staring at a foolish little black figure that rolled its eyes, and were swearing that it was first-cousin to Beelzebub, I got hold of a drawer, in which were these pretty things," and he produced a string of clear-set diamonds of inestimable value; "these I brought away for your Lordship," he added, "they are too good for me, and I had just heard you were safe and sound, and a great man amongst the rebels. For my part, I satisfied myself with a handful or two of commoner trash in the shape of gold pieces, and this suit of clothes, with a few lace shirts and other articles of apparel, which I thought you might want."

I had by this time got into bed, but I could not refrain from examining the diamonds, which were certainly most splendid. After I had done, I returned them to Achilles, telling him, of course, that I could not accept of any thing so acquired, upon which he took them back again

very coolly, saying, "Very well, my Lord, then I will keep them myself. Times may change, and your opinion too. If I had not taken them some Catalonian rebel would, and therefore I will guard them safely as lawful plunder," and so saying, he left me to repose.

CHAPTER X.

SO fatigued was I, that the night passed like an instant, and when Achilles came to wake me the next morning, I could scarcely believe I had slept half an hour. The good little player returned instantly, as he began to dress me, to the subject of the diamonds, with the value of which he seemed well acquainted; and as he found me positive in my determination to appropriate no one article of his plunder, except a rich laced shirt or two, which had belonged to the Marquis de Villafranca, and was a very convenient accession to my wardrobe, he requested that, at all events, I would mention his possession of the diamonds to no one.

With this I willingly complied, as I felt that I had no right to use the generous offer he had made me against himself.

Before I was dressed, a message was conveyed to me from the Corregidor, stating that, as we should probably be occupied at the council till late, he had ordered some refreshment to be prepared for us before we went ; and farther, that he waited my leisure for a few minutes' conversation with me. I bade the servant stay for a moment, and then followed him to the Corregidor's eating room, where I was not at all displeased to find a very substantial breakfast, for not having eaten any thing since the meal which the Viceroy's negro had conveyed to me in prison, I was not lightly tormented with the demon of hunger. The Corregidor received me with a great deal more profound respect than I found myself entitled to ; and, seating me at the table, helped me to various dishes, which did great honour to the skill and taste of Achilles' friend the cook. After a little, the servants were sent away, and the officer addressed me with an important and mysterious tone, upon the views and determinations of France.

“ I am well aware, Monsieur le Comte de L'Orme,” said he, “ that the utmost secrecy and discretion are required in an agent of your character ; and that, of course, you are bound

to communicate with no one who cannot show you some authority for so doing; but if you will look at that letter from Monsieur de Noyers, one of your ministers, and written also, as you will see, by the express command of his Eminence of Richelieu, you will have no longer, I am sure, any hesitation of informing me clearly, what aid and assistance your government intends to give us in our present enterprise."

I took the letter which he offered, but replied without opening it, "I am afraid, Sir, that you greatly mistake the character in which I am here. You must look upon me simply as a French gentleman whom accident has conducted to your city, unauthorized and, indeed, incompetent to communicate with any body upon affairs of state, and probably more in the dark than yourself, in regard to what aid, assistance, or countenance, the French government intends to give to the people of Catalonia."

The Corregidor shook his head, and opened his eyes, and seemed very much astonished. After falling into a reverie, however, for a moment or two, he began to look wiser and replied, "Well, Sir," I admire your prudence and discretion, and doubtless you act accord-

ing to the orders of your government, but at the same time I must beg that, when you write to France, you will inform his Eminence of Richelieu, that the Catalonian people are not to be trifled with, and that having, under promises of assistance from the French government, thrown off the Castilian yoke, we expect that France will immediately realize her promises, or we must apply to some other power for more substantial aid."

"Although I once more inform you, my dear Sir," answered I, "that you entirely mistake my situation, yet at the same time, I shall be very happy to bear any communication you may think fit to the Cardinal de Richelieu, and in the mean time set your mind quite at ease about the assistance you require. The French government, depend upon it, will keep to the full every promise which has been made you. It is too much the interest of France to alienate Catalonia from the dominions of King Philip, to leave a doubt of her even surpassing your expectations, in regard to the aid you hope for."

"Nay, this is consoling me most kindly!" cried the Corregidor, persisting in attributing to me the character of a diplomatist, in spite of all my abnegation thereof; "may I communi-

cate what you say to the members of the council, and the chief nobility of the province?"

"As my private opinion, decidedly," replied I; "but not in the least as coming from one in a public capacity, which would be grossly deceiving them."

"My dear young friend," said the Corregidor, rising and embracing me with the most provoking self-satisfaction in all his looks, "doubt not my discretion. I understand you perfectly, and will neither commit you nor myself, depend upon it. As to your return to France, there is not a merchant in the town who will not willingly put the best vessel in the harbour at your command when you like; but if you wish to set out instantly, there is a brigantine appointed to sail for Marseilles this very day, at high water, which takes place at noon. Our dispatches for the Cardinal shall be prepared directly. I will superintend the embarkation of your sea-store, and though sorry to lose the assistance of your wise counsel, I am satisfied that your journey will produce the most beneficial effects to the general cause."

As I now saw that the Corregidor had perfectly determined in his own mind that I should bear the character of an agent of the French

government whether I liked it or not, I was fain to submit, and take advantage of the opportunity of returning to my own country with all speed. It was therefore arranged that I should depart by the brigantine for Marseilles; and having seen Achilles, and ascertained that he would rather accompany me to France than stay beside the flesh-pots of Egypt, I gave him twenty louis from my little stock, and bade him embark with all speed, after having bought me some clothes, through the intervention of his friend the cook. I then proceeded with the Corregidor to the viceregal palace.

On each side of the grand entrance were tied a number of horses, apparently lately arrived, heated and dusty, and it appeared to me stained with blood. There was a good deal of bustle and confusion too in the halls and passages — persons pushing in and out, parties of six and seven gathered together in corners, and various other signs of some new event having happened. We passed on, however, to the hall in which the Council had assembled the night before, and here we found that it was again beginning to resume its sitting.

“Have you heard the news?” cried the Alcayde of Lerida; “our horsemen have defeated

a party of a hundred Arragonese cavalry, who were coming to the city, not knowing the revolution which had taken place. The whole troop has been slain or dispersed, and its leader brought in a prisoner."

At this moment Garcias beckoned me across the room, and leading me to one of the windows, he spoke to me with a rambling kind of manner, very different from the general clearness of his discourse, asking me a great many questions concerning the Corregidor, his treatment of me, and all that had passed, of which I gave him a clear account, telling him my determination to depart for France immediately.

"You do right," said he somewhat abruptly; "you might become involved more deeply than you could wish with the politics of our province.—Did you look into the strong-room to the right, at the bottom of the stairs, as you came up?"

"No," replied I, somewhat surprised at his strange manner. "Why do you ask?"

"Because if you had done so you would have seen an old friend," replied Garcias, biting his lip; "the Chevalier de Montenero, who lives near you at the white house below—"

“I know, I know whom you mean,” cried I.
“What of him?”

“Why he has been taken prisoner this morning,” replied Garcias, “by one of the most deeply injured and most cruelly revengeful of our Cavaliers. He is known to have been a dear friend of the late Viceroy, with whom he served in New Spain, and they demand that he be brought out into the square, and shot without mercy.”

“They shall shoot me first!” replied I.

“Indeed?” said Garcias, composedly, and then added a moment after, “And me too. I owe the Chevalier thanks for having sheltered me when I was pursued by the Douanniers: and though he spake harshly of my trade, he shall not find me ungrateful. But see, the Council are seating themselves! Go to them, make them as long a speech as you can about your going to France; avoid, if possible, denying any more that you are an agent of that government. You have done so once, which is enough. Let the Corregidor persuade them and himself of what he likes—but at all events, keep them employed till I come back, upon any other subject than the prisoners. I go to

collect together some of my most resolute and trusty fellows, to back us in case of necessity. Quick ! to the table ! The Alcayde is rising to speak."

I advanced ; and while Garcias left the hall. I addressed the Council without seating myself, apologising to the Alcayde, who was already on his feet, for pre-engaging his audience, and stating the short time I had to remain amongst them as an excuse for my doing so. I then, with as lengthy words and as protracted emphasis as I could command, went on, offering to be the bearer of any message, letter, or communication to the government of France ; at the same time promising to carry to my own country the most favourable account of all their proceedings. I dilated upon their splendid deeds, and their generous sentiments, but I fixed the whole weight of my eulogy upon their moderation in victory, and then darted off to a commendation of mercy and humanity in general ; showing that it was always the quality of great and generous minds, and that men who had performed the most splendid achievements in the field, and evinced the greatest sagacity in the cabinet, had always shown the greatest moderation to their enemies when they were in

their power.—Still Garcias did not come ; and I proceeded to say, that by evincing this magnanimous spirit, the Catalonians bound all good men to their cause, and that it would become not only a pleasure, but an honour and a glory to the nation who should assist them in their quarrel, and maintain them in their freedom. At the end of this tirade my eyes turned anxiously towards the door, for both topics and words began to fail me ; but Garcias did not appear ; and I was obliged to return to my journey to France. I begged them, therefore, to consider well the dispatches they were about to send, and at the same time to have them made up with all convenient dispatch ; requesting that they would themselves give a full detail of what had already been done, of what they sought to do, and what they required from France ; and after having exhausted my whole stock of sentences, I was at last obliged to end, by calling them “ the brave, the moderate, the magnanimous Catalonians ! ! ”

What between the acclamation that was to follow this—for men never fail to applaud their own praises—and any discussion which might arise concerning the dispatches, I hoped that Garcias would have time to return ; but, at all

events, I could not have manufactured a sentence more, if my own life had been at stake.

I was, however, disappointed in my expectations. The magnanimous Catalonians did not, indeed, neglect to shout ; but the Alcayde of Lerida, who was one of those men whose own business is always more important than that of any one else, rose, immediately after the noise had subsided, and represented to the Council that they were keeping one of their most active and meritorious partisans, Gil Moreno, waiting with his prisoner ; and that from the nature of the case, as he conceived it, five minutes would be sufficient to decide upon their course of action. He then ended with proposing, that before any other business whatever was entered upon, the prisoner should be brought before the Council.

This was received with such a quick and cordial assent from all the members of the Council, that it would have been worse than useless to resist it, and I was compelled to hear, unopposed, the order given for Gil Moreno to bring his prisoner to the council-chamber.

The Catalonian had probably been waiting with some impatience for this summons ; and the moment after it was given, he presented himself before the Council. If ever relentless

cruelty was expressed in a human countenance, it was in his. He was a short man, very quadrate in form, with large, disproportioned feet and hands, and a wide, open chest, over which now appeared a steel corslet. His complexion was as dingy as a Moor's, and his features in general large, but not ill-formed. His eyes, however, were small, black as jet, and sparkling like diamonds; and his forehead, though broad and high, was extremely protuberant and heavy, while a deep wrinkle running between his eyebrows, together with a curve downwards in the corners of his mouth, and a slight degree of prominence of the under jaw, gave his face a bitter sternness of expression, which was not at all softened by a sinister inward cast of his right eye. Behind him, was brought in, between two armed Catalonians, and followed by a multitude of others, the Chevalier—or, as the Spaniards designated him, the Conde de Monceno. His arms were tied tightly with ropes, but the tranquillity of his looks, the calmness of his step, and the dignity of his whole demeanour were unaltered; and he cast his eyes round the Council slowly and deliberately, scanning every countenance, till his look encountered mine. The expression of surprise which his

countenance then assumed is not easily to be described. I thought even that the sudden sight of one he knew, amongst so many hostile faces, called up, before he could recollect other feelings, even a momentary glance of pleasure, but it was like a sunbeam struggling through wintry clouds, lost before it was distinctly seen; and his brow knit into somewhat of a frown, as he ran his eye over the other members of the Council.

“Speak, Gil Moreno,” said the Alcayde of Lerida, who being the first person that had received the news of the Chevalier’s capture, had appropriated it to himself, as an affair which he was especially called upon to manage:—what report have you to make to the supreme Council of Catalonia?”

“A short one,” answered Moreno, roughly. “On my patrol this morning, two miles from the city gate, I met with a body of Arragonese horse. I bade them stand, and give the word, when, they gave *The King*; and I instantly attacked them—killed some—dispersed the rest, and took their captain. According to the orders given out last night, I brought him to the Council, and now, because he is a known friend of the tyrant who died yesterday, was taken in arms against Catalonian freedom, and is in

every way an enemy to the province, I demand that he be turned out into the Plaza, and shot, as he deserves."

"And what reason can the prisoner give, why this should not be the case?" demanded the Alcayde, turning to the Chevalier.

"Very few," answered he, with somewhat of a scornful smile, "and those of such a nature that from the constitution of this self-named Council, they are not very likely to be received. —The laws of arms—the common principles of right and justice—the usages of all civilized nations, and the feelings and notions of all men of honour."

It may easily be supposed, that such a speech was not calculated, particularly, to prejudice the Council in favour of the speaker, and I would have given much to have stopped it in its course; but just as the Chevalier ended, my mind was greatly relieved by the re-appearance of Garcias, who now took his seat by the side of the Corregidor, while the Alcayde replied: "Such reasons, Sir," answered he, "must remain vague and insignificant, without you can show that they apply to your case, which as yet, you have not attempted to prove."

"The application is so self-evident," said I, interposing, "that it hardly requires to be

pointed out. If the Catalonians are a separate people, as they declare themselves, and at war with Philip, King of Castile, they are bound to observe the rights of nations, and to treat well those prisoners they take from their enemy. The common principles of right and justice require, that every man should be proved guilty of some specific crime, before he be condemned. The usages of all civilized nations sufficiently establish that no man is criminal for bearing arms, except it be against the land of his birth, or the government under which he lives; and the feelings of men of honour must induce you to respect, rather than to blame, the man who does his utmost endeavour, in favour of the monarch whom he serves."

"Ho! ho! Sir Frenchman!" cried Moreno, glaring upon me with eyes, the cast in which was changed to a frightful squint by the vehemence of his anger. "Come you here to prate to us about the laws of nations, and the feelings of honour? Know, that the Catalonians feel what is due to themselves, and their own honour, better than you or any other of your country can instruct them. — Know, that they will have justice done upon their oppressors; and if you, Frenchman, do not like it, we care

not for you, and can defend our own rights with our own hands.—Once, and again, I demand the death of this prisoner, and if the Council, as they choose to call themselves, do not grant it ——

“What then?” thundered Garcias: “The Council as they choose to call themselves! I say, the Council as the Catalonian people have called them—and if they do not grant the death of the prisoner, what then?”

“Why then his life is mine, and I will take it!” answered Moreno, drawing a pistol from his belt, and aiming at the head of the Chevalier, who stood as firm and unblenching as a rock.

I was at the bottom of the table—opposite to me stood Moreno and the Chevalier; and without the thought of a moment, I vaulted across and seized the arm of the Catalonian. It was done like lightning—almost before I knew it myself, and feeling that he could no longer hit the Chevalier, the blood-thirsty villain struggled to turn the muzzle of the pistol upon me. A good many people pressed round us, embarrassing me by striving to aid me; and getting the pistol near my head, Moreno fired. The ball, however, did not injure me,

but just grazing my neck, went on, and struck the Alcayde of Lerida on the temple. He started up from his chair—fell back in it, and expired without uttering a word.

“By Heaven he has killed one of the Council!” cried Garcias. “Seize him! He shall die by St. James!”

But Moreno turned to the crowd who filled that end of the hall; “Down with this self-elected Council!” cried he, “down with them! They would make worse slaves of us than the Castilians had done. Who will stand by Moreno?”

“I will! I will!” cried each of the two who had entered with him to guard the Chevalier. “I will,” uttered another voice behind him; but at the same instant the whole crowd, upon whom he had mistakingly relied, but who were, in fact, the most certain followers of Garcias, threw themselves upon Moreno, and those that had expressed themselves of his party, and in a moment the whole four were tied hand and foot, as surely as they had tied the Chevalier.”

“I say, down with those who would introduce dissension and insubordination into the new government of Catalonia,” cried Garcias. “Members of the Council,” he added, “what-

ever services I may have rendered, and which I trust somewhat surpass those of this rebel to your authority, I seek no more than that share of influence which the people have bestowed upon me, in common with yourselves ; and when I propose that the C'onde de Montenero shall be well treated, and his life spared, I do so, merely as one of your own body, possessing but a single voice out of twelve. Let us, however, determine upon this directly, that we may proceed to the more important business of the dispatches to be sent to France. Give me your votes."

Whatever might be the tone of moderation which Garcias assumed, his influence with the people was evidently so powerful, that of course it extended in some degree to the Council ; and their votes were instantly given in favour of what he proposed. The next consideration became how to dispose of the Chevalier. Every one present knew the unstable basis on which their authority rested, and in case of any change in the popular feeling, it was evident that the lives of all the prisoners would be the first sacrifice offered at the shrine of anarchy.

A good deal of vague conversation passed upon the subject, and finding that every one

hesitated to make the proposition, which probably every one wished, I took it upon myself, and proposed, that, as an act of magnanimity, which a whole world must admire and respect, they should liberate the Chevalier de Montenero, and every other person attached to the Castilian government; merely taking the precaution of conveying them to the frontier of Catalonia. "At the same time," I said, "those Catalonians who were last night committed to prison upon frivolous accusations, can be again examined. If not guilty of serious crimes, let them also be freed. Thus, the last thing I shall see, before returning to my own country, will be the greatest act of moderation which a victorious nation ever performed in the first excitement of its success."

While I spoke, the eyes of Gil Moreno, who had not been removed from the hall, glared upon me as if he could have eaten my heart; and when the Council gave a general assent to the proposal, he turned away with a groan of disappointed rage, biting his upper lip with the teeth of the under jaw, till the contortion of his face was actually frightful.

On hearing the decision of the Council, the Chevalier advanced a step, and addressed a few

words to them. "Catalonians," said he, "you have acted in a different manner from that which I expected, and I therefore tell you, what I never would have done while the sword was suspended over my head—that I came not here with intentions hostile to your liberties. I knew not of any revolt having taken place in this province, although I had heard rumours that many galling oppressions had been inflicted on the people. My object in coming was to see an ancient companion in arms, who *was* the Viceroy of this province; and I came by his own invitation, to assist him with my poor advice in controlling the irregularities and enormities of the undisciplined soldiery with which a bad minister had encumbered his government. By his request, also, I brought with me from Arragon a troop of guards, on whose good conduct he could rely, they having served under my command in Peru. Were my hands free, I could show you a letter from the Viceroy, in which he commiserates your sufferings, and bitterly complains of the insubordination of the troops. I hear that you have slain him.—If so, God forgive you, for he wished you well! In regard to your revolt from the crown of Spain, depend upon it you will be compelled,

sooner or later, to return to the dominion of King Philip. It is not that I would speak in favour of the Count Duke Olivarez," he continued, seeing an irritable movement in the Council ; " that bad minister has injured me as well as you, and has been the cause of my having for years quitted Spain, wherein I had once hoped to have made my country : but still, by language, by manners, by geographical situation, Catalonia is an integral part of Spain, and——"

" We will spare you the trouble, Sir," interrupted the Corregidor, " of saying any more. We have cast off the yoke of Spain, and, by the aid of God, we will maintain our independence as a separate people ; but should not that be granted us, we would have King Philip know, that sooner than return to the dominion under which we have suffered so much, we will give ourselves to any other nation capable of supporting by force of arms our division from Spain. Let the Alguazils untie the prisoner's hands."

Shortly after the Chevalier had begun to speak, Garcias had quitted the hall, and he now returned, announcing that he had (with that prompt energy which peculiarly characterized

him), already prepared a horse and escort for the Conde de Montenero, which would carry him safely to the limits of Catalonia. The Chevalier bowed to the Council, glanced his eyes towards me, of whom, since his first entrance, he had taken no more notice than he bestowed on the person least known to him at the table, and then followed Garcias from the hall. I could not resist my desire to speak to him, and making a sudden pretence to leave the Council, I pursued the steps of the Chevalier and his conductor to the small room in which he had been formerly confined. Garcias was turning away from him as I approached, saying, "The horse shall be up in an instant, but do not show yourself to the people till the last moment."

As he went I entered, and the Chevalier turned immediately to me, with that sort of frigid politeness that froze every warmer feeling of my heart.

"I have to thank you, Sir," said he, "for my life, which is valuable to me, not merely as life, but from causes which you may one day know; a few years just now, are of more consequence to me than I once thought they ever could be. I therefore, Sir, return you my thanks, for interposing both your voice

and your person, this day, to save me from death."

"Monsieur de Montenero," replied I, "there has been a time, when your manner to me would have been very different; but I must rest satisfied with the consciousness of not meriting your regard less than I did then."

"I am sorry, Sir," replied he, "that you compel me to look upon you in any other light than as a stranger who has interposed to save my life, but as it is so, allow me to say, that something else than mere assertion is necessary to convince me, on a subject which we had better not speak upon. Could you give any thing better than assertion, I declare to Heaven, that your own father would not have the same joy in your exculpation from guilt — nay, not half so much, as I should;" and there shone in his eye a momentary beam of that kindness with which he once regarded me, that convinced me what he said was true.

"Monsieur de Montenero," replied I, "the reasons for my silence are removed, and I can give you something better than assertion."

"Then do, in God's name!" cried he, "and relieve my mind from a load that has burdened it for months. How you came here, or what

you do here, I know not ; but there is certainly some mystery in your conduct, which I cannot comprehend. Explain it all then, Louis, if ever the affection, with which you once seemed to regard me, was real."

I grasped his hand, for that one word Louis, re-awakened, by the magic chain of association, all that regard in my bosom which his coldness and suspicion had benumbed ; and in a moment more I should have told him enough to satisfy him that his doubts had been unfounded. But it seemed as if Heaven willed that that story was never to be told, for just as I was about to speak, Garcias returned in haste. "The horse is at the gate," said he, "and the guard prepared ; mount, Señor, with all speed, and out by the Roses-gate, for Moreno's people have heard of his arrest, and are gathering at the other end of the town."

"Louis," said the Chevalier, turning to me, "if you will proceed with the explanation you were about to give, and can really satisfy my mind on that subject, I will stay and take my chance, for I shall no longer fear death for a moment."

This declaration, as may easily be supposed, surprised me not a little, after the value which

he had before allowed that life possessed in his eyes ; for whatever might be ~~the~~ interest which he took in me personally, and whatever might be the enthusiasm that characterized his mind, I could not conceive that, without some strong motive superadded, he would offer to risk so much for the sake of one, in regard to whose innocence he had shown himself almost unwilling to be convinced.

Garcias, however, permitted no hesitation on the subject. " Stay !" cried he, in an accent of almost indignant astonishment : " When we have perilled both our lives to gain you the means of going, do you talk of staying ? Señor de Montenero, you are not mad ; and if you are, I am not ; therefore I say, you must go directly, without a moment's pause," and not allowing another word, he hurried him away, saw him mount, commanded the escort of twenty men, who accompanied him, to defend him with their lives ; and then returning to me, led the way back to the Council-hall.

" Members of the Supreme Council of Catalonia," said he abruptly as we entered, " our first duty is to show to the nation, that though we have cast off the yoke of Castile, we have

not cast off the restraint of law. A member of this honourable body, has been shot at the very council table, by a man acting in open rebellion to the authority committed to us by the people—we require no evidence of the fact, which was committed before our eyes. If we let the punishment slumber, justice and order are at end; anarchy, slaughter, and confusion, must inevitably follow. Give me your voices, noble Catalonians. I pronounce Gil Moreno guilty of murder, aggravated by treason towards the nation, and therefore worthy of death! My vote is given!” He spoke rapidly and sternly; and after a momentary hesitation, and whispering consultation, the rest of the Council unanimously agreed in his award.

“Take away the prisoner,” said Garcias, and Moreno was removed. “Now let some noble Señor write the sentence,” continued he, “I am no clerk, but I will attend to the execution of it.”

The sentence was accordingly written, and having been signed by all the members of the Council, Garcias took it, as he said, to have it fixed upon the front of the palace, and left us. His absence, however, had beyond doubt, another object, for while the Corregidor was, according to the direction of the Council, writing

a dispatch from the provisional government of Catalonia, to the prime minister of France, the stern voice of the insurrectionary leader was heard in the square, giving the word of command, "Fire!" The report of a platoon was instantly heard; and it was not difficult to guess, that Moreno had tasted of that fate which he had been so willing to inflict on others.

The dispatches were soon prepared; and the Council, willing to assume all the pomp of established authority, ordered me to be conducted to the port, as one of its members, with all sort of ceremony. Garcias remained at the palace, to take measures against any movement on the part of Moreno's partisans; but the Corregidor accompanied me to the water-side, and having formally resigned the seat, to which I had been called in the Council, I embarked on board the brigantine, and took leave, for ever, of Barcelona.

CHAPTER XI.

THE most humiliating of all the various kinds of human suffering is undoubtedly sea-sickness, and therefore I will willingly pass over all my sensations in crossing the Gulf of Lyons. I believe, however, that the excessive importunity of my corporeal feelings did me good, inasmuch as it served, for a time, to obliterate from my memory the various strange and exciting scenes which I had lately gone through. If we could suppose the soul itself to be in a state of ebriety, I should say that my mind had been for several days drunk with excess of stimulus; and the relaxation consequent upon it, during the vacant hours of the voyage, would have been actually painful, had not the horrors of sea-sickness so employed the body, that the mind could not act.

We landed then at Marseilles, after a safe and rapid passage, and I prepared to set out with all speed for Lyons, hoping, by being the first to hear the Cardinal de Richelieu news, which I well divined would be most joyful to him, that I might at all events remove some of the dangers and difficulties of my situation — a situation which I hardly dared to contemplate.

My father, though richly endowed with personal courage, wanted, as I have said, that moral courage, which leads a man to look every thing that is painful or disagreeable, boldly in the face. With him, indeed, this disposition was carried to the excess of flying from the contemplation, even of inconvenient trifles; but enough of it had descended to me, to make me willingly turn my eyes from circumstances, like those in which I was now placed.

Money, I had hardly more than would bear me to Paris; resources, I had none before me, and I shrank from the idea of either writing to, or hearing from, the once-loved home that I had left, with a degree of horror, it is difficult to describe. What could I write, without forcing my mind to dwell upon details that were agony to think of? What could I hear, but reproaches, which I knew not well whether I

deserved or not ; or tenderness, which would have been more painful still ? My only resource was like the ostrich in the fable, to shut my eyes against the evils that pursued me, and to hurry forward as fast as I could, filling up the vacuity of each moment with any circumstances less painful than my own thoughts, and leaving to time and chance—the two great patrons of the unfortunate—to remove my difficulties, and provide for my wants.

At the inn at Marseilles, as soon as my little attendant, Achilles, had recovered what he called his powers of ambulation, the rolling of the sea having left him, even on land, certain sensations of unsteadiness which made him walk in various zigzag meanders during the whole day ; he unfolded to my astonished eyes, the clothes which he had bought for me at Barcelona. First, appeared a splendid Spanish riding-dress of philomot cloth, laced with silver, and perfectly new ; with a black beaver and white plumes, which, together with the untanned riding boots, sword, and dagger, all handsomely mounted, might cost, upon a very moderate calculation, at least one hundred and fifty louis-d'ors. I concluded myself ruined of course ; but what was my surprise and horror when he

dragged forth a long leathern case, containing a rich dress-suit of white silk, laced with gold ; a white sword and gold hilt, a bonnet and plume, that might have served a prince, with collars of Flemish lace, gold-embroidered gloves of Brussels, and shoes of Cordova.

If it had been a box of serpents I could not have gazed into it with more horror, my purse feeling lighter by a pistole for every fold he unplied in the rich white silk. "There ! there ! there !" cried he, contemplating them with as much delight as I experienced consternation. "What an exquisite Alexander the Great, I should make in that white silk ! Never was such an opportunity lost, for fitting up the wardrobe of a theatre — Never ! never ! but I could not bear to part with the little shining yellow things, that kept my pocket so warm, and therefore I only bought what was necessary for you, *Seigneurie*."

"And where do you think that my *Seigneurie* is to get money to pay for them ?" demanded I, somewhat sharply. "Pray how much have you spent more than I gave you ?"

The poor little man looked up with an air of consternation that increased my own. "Spent !" cried he ; "spent more than you gave me !—

Why, none at all. I got them all for seven louis."

"Then they must have been stolen," cried I.

"To be sure!" answered he in a tone of the most naïve simplicity in the world; "to be sure they were stolen. How did you think I should come by them else?"

Though in no very merry mood, the tone, the air, and simplicity of the little player overcame my gravity, and I could not help laughing: while I asked who they had really belonged to, before they came so honestly into his possession."

"Lord! how should I know?" replied he. "If you want to hear how I got them, that is easily told. When you went away to the Council, after bidding me buy you a riding suit, I went out with Jaccomo, as they call him, the cook; and as we were marching along in search of a fripier, we passed by the ruins of the arsenal, where you and I were confined, and where I killed the savage soldado," he continued, drawing himself up till he fancied himself full six feet high. "But that has nothing to do with the matter. The arsenal is now in a terrible state, partly battered to pieces with the cannon, partly blown up, as it seemed to me.

but we just went in to take a look about us, when suddenly out from amongst a whole heap of ruins creeps a peasant-fellow, with these two large mails on his back, and a heap of other things in a bag round his neck. At first he looked frightened, but after a little took heart, and told us a long story, which Jaccomo translated for me, showing forth that having come to town too late for the famous plunder of the day before, he had hunted about amongst the rooms that were yet standing in the arsenal, till he had found all the things we saw, and added, that if we would go on we should find a deal more. This, however, did not suit Jaccomo, who talked to him very loudly about taking him before the Council, and frightened him a good deal, after which he made him show us what was in the mails; when, finding they would suit your Lordship, I made the cook offer the man seven louis for them, though he said I was a great fool for offering so much; and that if I would let him, he would frighten him so he would give them up for nothing. But as I knew you would not wear them without you paid for them, I gave the man the money, who was very glad to get it, and walked

away quite contented with that, and several other suits that he had besides."

This information satisfied my conscience ; and certainly if there never were seven louis better laid out, never was apparel more needed : for what between my journeys in the Pyrenees and my adventures in Spain, my *pourpoint* would have qualified me for a high rank amongst those poor chevaliers whom we see frequenting the corners of low taverns, and waiting patiently till some solitary traveller without acquaintance, or indefatigable tippler abandoned by his mates, invites them to share his tankard for the mere sake of company.

The next thing was to try them on, when, to my mortification, I found, that though in point of length they suited me exactly, both the *pourpoint* and the *haut de chausse* much required the intervention of a pair of shears to reduce the waist to the same circumference as my own. A small, lean-shanked Marseillois, exercising the honourable office of tailor to the inn, was soon procured, and setting him down in the corner of the chamber, I suffered him not to depart till both the suits were reduced to a just proportion, and I no longer looked as if I had

got into an empty balloon when I again tried them on.

One night I suffered to roll past tranquilly, though a thousand phantoms of the last two days hovered about my pillow and disturbed my rest. The next morning, however, a new embarrassment presented itself, for, on inquiring for the boat to Lyons, I was informed that it did not depart till the next day, and even then I found it would be so long on its passage that I must abandon all hope of being the first bearer of news from Catalonia if I pursued so dilatory a mode of travelling. At the same time I well knew that it was quite out of the question to take poor little Achilles so many hundred miles on horseback. The only way, therefore, which we could determine upon, was for him to remain behind till the boat sailed, and then to make the best of his way to Paris to rejoin me, while I went on as fast as possible and accomplished my errand in the mean while.

Being now in France, and having his pockets well garnished, little Achilles did not, of course, feel himself near so much at a loss as he would have done in Spain; but still he clung about me, and whimpered like a baby to see me depart. I believe that he had seldom known kind-

ness before, and he estimated it as a jewel from its rarity. He made one request, however, before I departed, with which, though unwillingly, I could not refuse to comply. My scruple of conscience about the diamonds of which he had plundered the house of Monsieur de Villafrauca, had in some degree touched his own, and he had heroically resolved to return them if ever he found the opportunity—always, however, reserving the right to make use of any part of them in case either his own or my occasions should require it. But in the mean time he remained under the most dreadful anxiety lest he should be robbed on the way to Paris, and made it his most humble request, both as I was the most valiant of the two, and as I should be a less space of time on the road, that I would take charge of the packet in which they were enveloped.

I did as he wished, though I would willingly have been excused; and having left him to shed his tender tears over our separation, I mounted the post-horse that had been brought me, and set out on my journey for Paris.

The night's rest which I had taken at Marseilles served me till I arrived at Lyons; and the one which I indulged in there carried me

on to Paris. No time was lost on my journey ; a single word concerning dispatches for the Minister making doors fly open and horses gallop better than the magic rings of the fairy tales.

At length I began to see the villages growing nearer and nearer together, separate houses highly ornamented and decorated, yet not large enough to dignify themselves with the name of chateaux, troops of people seemingly returning from some great city to their homes in the country, strings of carts and horses, and, in short, every thing announcing the proximity of a metropolis, while at the same time the sound of a multitude of bells came borne upon the wind towards me, telling me that I arrived at some moment of great public rejoicing. I will not stop to inquire why that sound fell so heavily upon my heart ; but so it did, and all the encreasing gaitly I met as I began to enter into the suburbs, but rendered me the more melancholy.

It was by this time beginning to grow dusk, and directing my horse towards the *quartier St. Eustache*, I alighted at a small auberge which our landlord at Marseilles had recommended as the best in Paris. Having taken off my bag-

gage with my own hands, and paid my postilion, I looked about in the little court-yard for some one to show me an apartment. It was long, however, before I could find any one, and even at last, the only person I could meet with was an old woman, the great-grandmother of mine host, I believe, who told me that all the world were out at the fête, and that I might sit down in the *salle-à-manger* if I liked till they came back.

This seemed but poor entertainment for the best Auberge in Paris, but I was forced to content myself with what I found, for it was too late to seek another lodging, even had I not appointed Achilles to meet me there. Nor, indeed was my companion, the old woman, very entertaining, for she was so deaf, that she heard not one word I said, and merely replied to all my inquiries on whatever subject they were made, by informing me, that every one was at the fête, repeating the precise words she made use of before.

Thus passed the time for an hour; but then the face of affairs altered. The host—a jolly Aubergiste as ever roasted a capon—rushed in, in his best attire, followed by his wife and his sister, and his sister's husband, all half

inebriated with good spirits; and I was soon at my desire shown to an apartment, which though small, was sufficiently clean; and having been told that supper would be ready at the table d'hôte in an hour, I waited while the various odours rising up from the kitchen to my window, seemed sent on purpose to inform me, step by step, of the progress of the meal.

Alone—in Paris—unknown to a soul—with a vacant hour lying open before me—it was impossible any longer to avoid that unkind friend, thought. For a moment or two, I walked up and down the little chamber, whose antique furniture—the precise allotted portion which a traveller could not do without—called to my mind the old but splendid garnishing of my apartments at the Chateau de L'Orme.

Where—I asked myself—where were all the familiar objects that habit had rendered dear to my eye—where all the little trifles, round which memory lingers, even after time has torn her away from things of greater import?—where were the grand mountains, whose vast masses would even now have been stretching dark and sublime across the twilight sky before my windows?—where the free breeze that wafted health with every blast?—where were the eyes

whose glance was sunshine, and the voices whose tones were music, and the hearts whose happiness had centred in me alone? What had I instead? A petty chamber, in a petty inn—the rank close atmosphere of a swarming city, and the eternal clang of scolding, lying, blaspheming tongues, rising up with a din that would have deafened a Cyclop—while misery, and vice, and want, and sorrow, cabal, and treason, and treachery, and crime, were working around me, in the thousand, narrow, jammed-up cells of that great infernal hive. Such was the picture that imagination contrasted with the sweet calm scene which memory portrayed; and, casting myself down on the bed, I hid my face on the clothes, giving way to a burst of passionate sorrow, that relieved me with unmanly but still with soothing tears.

While I yet lay there, I heard some one move in the chamber; and starting suddenly up, I saw a man carefully examining my baggage, with a very suspicious and nonchalant air. “Who the devil are you?” cried I, laying my hand on my sword.

“*Garçon de l'Auberge, ne vous deplaise. Monsieur,*” replied the man.

“Then Monsieur Garçon de l'Auberge,” said

I, "beware how you touch my baggage, for though there be nothing in it but my clothes and a packet for his Eminence the Cardinal, I shall take care to slit your nose if you finger it without orders."

The man started back at the name of the Cardinal as if he had touched a viper, gave me the *Monseigneur* immediately, and replied, that he came to tell me supper was served, and the guests about to place themselves at table.

Following him down, I found the *salle-à-manger* tenanted by about ten persons, while upon the table smoked a savoury and plentiful supper, on which they but waited the presence of the host to fall with somewhat wolfish appetites.

Silence reigned omnipotent at the first course ; but at the second, two or three of the guests, more loquacious than the rest, began to entertain themselves and their neighbours, with their own importance.

One, whose beard was as black and shaggy as a hawthorn tree in winter, spoke of his exploits in war, and showed himself a very Cæsar, at least in words.

Another was all-powerful in love, and told of many a cunning *passe* which he had put upon

jealous husbands and careful relations. No female heart had ever resisted him, according to his account, which was the more extraordinary, as he was the ugliest of human beings. This he acknowledged, however, in some degree, swearing he knew not what the poor fools found to love in him.

A third was a mighty man of state, talked in a low voice, and told all the news. He had seen, he said, a certain great man that day, whom it was dangerous to name ; and he could tell if he liked a mighty secret—but no, he would not—he was afraid of their indiscretion ; —then again, however, he changed his mind, and would—they were all discreet men, he was sure. The news was this,—it was undoubted he could assure them. Portugal had again fallen under the dominion of Spain—he had it from the best authority. The means of the counter-revolution was this—the Viceroy of Catalonia had sent twenty thousand men by Gibraltar, straight to Portugal, where they had uncrowned the Duke of Braganza and restored King Philip, for which great service the King had appointed the Viceroy of Catalonia, his prime minister.

As I knew how much of this news was truth.

I of course gave the politician his due share of credit, and judging the rest of the company from the specimen he afforded, I was rather inclined to imagine, that the lover's face made a truer report of his achievements than his tongue, and that, perhaps, the beard of the soldado, constituted the most efficient part of his valour. I did not, however, seek to enquire into particulars ; but remained as silent as several plain-looking respectable shopkeepers, who sat near me, and only opened my mouth to ask if I could procure some one to guide me that evening to a place I wished to visit in the town. This was addressed to my next neighbour, who had himself shown no symptoms of loquacity ; but it caught the ears of the man of the sword, who had been admiring the lace upon my riding suit, with somewhat the expression of a cat looking into a vase of gold-fish ; and he instantly proposed in a very patronizing manner to be my conductor himself. " I have half an hour to spare, young Sir," said he, " your countenance pleases me, and I am willing to bestow that leisure upon you. You do not know Paris, and the strange folks you may meet ; my presence will be a protection to you."

I replied that I wanted no protection, that I

had always been able hitherto to protect myself; but that I was obliged by his offer of guiding me, and would accept it.

Having taken care to lock the door of my chamber before I came down, and having the dispatch from Barcelona about me, the moment we had done dinner I accompanied the complainant soldier into the street, and then begged him to show me to the Palais Cardinal. The name seemed to startle him a little, but he bade me follow him, which I accordingly did. For about a quarter of an hour, he went up one street and down another, turning and returning, like a hare pursued by the dogs, till at length I began to perceive, that the very last intention in my worthy guide's mind was to conduct me to the Palais Cardinal, which I well knew was not half a-mile from the Quartier St. Eustache. As he went, my honest companion amused me with the detail of a great many adventures, in which he had proved himself a Hercules, and carried on the conversation with such spirit, that he had it all to himself.

What he intended to do with me, God knows, but getting rather tired of walking about the streets, I fixed upon a respectable-looking

grocer's shop, which was not yet closed, and telling my companion that I wanted to buy some pepper, I walked in.

"Pepper!" cried he, following me, "what can you want with pepper?"

"I will tell you presently," I answered. "when I have asked this good gentleman, (the grocer) a question. Pray Sir," I continued, turning to the master of the house, "will you inform me, if I am near the Palais Cardinal? This worthy person agreed to guide me thither from the Rue des Prouvaires, quartier St. Eustache, and we have walked near a half-an-hour without finding it."

"He has taken you quite to the other end of the town," replied the grocer. "You are now, Sir, in the Rue des Pretres St. Paul."

"On my life!" cried the soldier, "I thought I was leading you right. By my honour, 'tis a strange mistake!"

"So strange, Sir," said I, "that if you do not instantly go to the right about and march off, I may be tempted to cudgel you."

"*Ventre St. Gris!*" cried the bully, laying his hand on his sword. But the grocer whispered a word or two to his shop-boy about

fetching the Capitaine du Guët, and the great soldier finding that his honour was likely to suffer less by retreating than by maintaining his ground, took to his heels and ran off with all speed.

CHAPTER XII.

“THAT, Sir, is one of the most assured rogues in Paris,” said the grocer; “he has once been at the galleys for seven years, and will very soon be there again. How you happened to fall in with such a fellow, I do not at all understand.”

I explained to the shopkeeper the circumstances, and he shook his head gravely at the name of the inn. “It has not a good reputation,” said he, “and as to its being the best in Paris,” he added with a laugh, “we Parisians would be very much ashamed of it if it was. However, Sir, as you want to go to the Palais Cardinal, my boy shall conduct you there; and though I wish to take away no one’s character, be upon your guard at your inn. There are many ways of plundering a stranger in this

good city, and if you need any assistance, send to me — though I am very bold to say so, for a gentleman of your figure must have many friends here, doubtless ; only I know something of the good people where you lodge, and, possibly, might manage them better than another.

I thanked him for his kindness most sincerely ; for though, perhaps, ever too much accustomed to rely upon myself, yet I will own, there was a solitary desolateness of feeling crept about my heart in that great city, which made it a relief to feel that there was somebody who took even a transient interest in me, and to whom I could apply for advice or aid, in case I needed it.

After taking down my new friend's address, I followed his shop-boy out into the street, and we pursued our way towards the Palais Cardinal, exactly re-treading the steps which my former valiant guide had made me take. All the way we went, the lad chattered with true Parisian activity of tongue, telling a thousand curious and horrible tales of the great, but cruel man, that I was about to see, and relating all the anecdotes of the day concerning his dark and mysterious policy.

“ No one knows,” said the boy, “ why he

does any thing, or how he does any thing. It was only last week that the strangest thing happened in the world. You have heard of the great wood of Marly, Monsieur? Well, one of the Cardinal's servants was ordered on Thursday, last week, to take an ass loaded with pure gold into that wood, and go on upon the road till he met a man who asked him, 'If the sun shone at midnight?' and then give him the ass's bridle and come away. So the servant went in, and after going a mile or more, he met a tall, fine man — somewhat dark, however — who asked him, 'Does the sun shine at midnight?' So the servant said nothing, but gave him the bridle. The stranger was not satisfied with that, but counted all the bags of gold upon the ass's back, and then told the servant to take it to the person who had sent it, and say that he had counted and watched, but the sun did not shine at midnight yet. So then the servant did as he bade him, and took it back to the Cardinal, who put two more sacks upon the ass, and sent the lackey back again; when he met the same man, and every thing passed as before, except that when he had counted the gold, the stranger shouted, 'Ha! ha! the sun shines at midnight!' and jumping upon the

donkey's back, he gave him a kick with his foot, which made him gallop as fast as any horse, and the servant never saw them any more! — Lord, Lord! is not that very strange, Monsieur?" continued the boy, and creeping close to me, he added, "They say, that the tall stranger was the Devil, and that the Cardinal had made a bargain with him, that if he would give him all the wit he desired, hell should have his soul at the end of twenty years. But when the twenty years were out, he wanted very much a few years more, so that he was obliged to make a new bargain, and pay a good round sum as interest upon his bond."

The conclusion of the boy's story brought us to the end of the Rue St. Honore, and shortly after he pointed out to me the façade of the Palais Cardinal. Having rewarded him with a crown, and sent him away well contented, I gazed up at the splendid building before me, whose grand features, massed together in the darkness, seemed almost as frowning and gloomy as a prison. The news which I brought, however, I was sure would be acceptable, and therefore walking on, I was about to approach the house, when I was challenged by a sentinel. I told him my business, and requested he would

show me my way to any of the offices, for I perceived no ready means of gaining admission. The soldier passed me on to another, who again passed me to the corps de garde, from whence I was taken to a small door and delivered, as a bale of goods, into the hands of a grim-looking man, who told me at once, that I could not see the Minister, who was abroad at the moment.

“Pray what is your business with his Eminence?” demanded the porter.

“It is business,” replied I, “with which you, my friend, can have no concern, and business of such import, that I must stay till I see him.”

“Come with me,” said the porter, after thinking a moment, and he then led me across a court, whercin a carriage was standing, with horses harnessed, and torches burning at the doors. “Monsieur de Noyers, one of the Secretaries of State, is here,” he added, seeing me remark the carriage, “and you can speak with him.”

“My business is with his Eminence the Cardinal,” replied I, “and with him alone.”

“Well, come with me, come with me!” said the porter. “If your business be really important, you must see some one who is com-

petent to speak on it ; and if it be not important, you had better not have come here."

Thus saying, he led me into a small hall, and thence into a cabinet beyond, hung with fine tapestry, and lighted by a single silver lamp. Here he bade me sit down, and left me. In a few minutes a door on the other side of the room opened, and a cavalier entered, dressed in a rich suit of black velvet, with a hat and plume. He was tall, thin, and pale, with a clear bright eye, and fine decided features. His beard was small and pointed, and his face oval, and somewhat sharp ; and though there was a slight stoop of his neck and shoulders, as if time or disease had somewhat enfeebled his frame, yet it took nothing from the dignity of his demeanour. He started, and seemed surprised at seeing any one there, but then immediately advanced, and looking at me for a moment, with a glance which read deeply whatever lines it fell upon, "Who are you?" demanded he : "What do you want ? What paper is that in your hand ?"

"My name," replied I, "is Louis Count de L'Orme ; my business is with the Cardinal de Richelieu, and this paper is one which I am charged to deliver into his hand."

"Give it to me," said the stranger, holding out his hand. My eye glanced over his unclerical habiliments, and I replied, "You must excuse me. This paper, and the farther news I bring, can only be given to the Cardinal himself."

"It shall go safe," he answered in a stern tone. "Give it to me, young Sir."

There was an authority in his tone that almost induced me to comply, but reflecting that I might be called to a severe account by the unrelenting minister, even for a mere error in judgment, I persisted in my original determination. "I must repeat," answered I, "that I can give this to no one but his Eminence himself, without an express order from his own hand to do so."

"Pshaw!" cried he, with something of a smile, and taking up a pen, which lay with some sheets of paper on the table, he dipped it in the ink, and scrawled in a large, bold hand,

"Deliver your packet to the bearer.

"RICHELIEU."

I made him a low bow and placed the letter in his hands. He read it, with the quick and

intelligent glance of one enabled by long habit to collect and arrange the ideas conveyed to him with that clear rapidity possessed alone by men of genius. In the mean time, I watched his countenance, seeking to detect amongst all the lines with which years and thought had channelled it, any expression of the stern, vindictive, despotic passions, which the world charged him withal, and which his own actions sufficiently evinced—it was not there, however:—all was calm.

Suddenly raising his eyes, his look fell full upon me, as I was thus busily scanning his countenance, and I know not why, but my glance sunk in the collision.

“Ha!” said he, rather mildly than otherwise, “you were gazing at me very strictly. Sir. Are *you* a reader of countenances?”

“Not in the least, Monsiegnur,” replied I. “I was but learning a lesson—to know a great man when I see one another time.”

“That answer, Sir, would make many a courtier’s fortune,” said the minister, “nor shall it mar yours, though I understand it. Remember, flattery is never lost at a court! ’Tis the same there as with a woman.—If it be too thick, she may wipe some of it away, as she

does her rouge ; but she will take care not to brush off all !”

To be detected in flattery has something in it so degrading, that the blood rushed up into my cheek, with the burning glow of shame. A slight smile curled the Minister's lip. “ Come, Sir,” he continued, “ I am going forth for half an hour, but I may have some questions to ask you ; therefore, I will beg you to wait my return. Do not stir from this spot. There, you will find food for the mind,” he proceeded, pointing out a small case of books ; “ in other respects, you shall be taken care of. I need not warn you to discretion. You have proved that you possess that quality, and I do not forget it.”

Thus speaking he left me, and for a few minutes I remained struggling with the flood of turbulent thoughts, which such an interview pours upon the mind. This, then, was the great and extraordinary minister, who at that moment held in his hands the fate of half Europe—the powers of whose mind, like Niorder, the tempest-god of the ancient Gauls, raised, guided, and enjoyed the winds and the storms, triumphing in the thunders of continual war, and the whirlwinds of political intrigue !

In a short time, two servants brought in a small table of lapis lazuli, on which they proceeded to spread various sorts of rare fruits and wines ; putting on also a china cup and a vase, which I supposed to contain coffee—a beverage that I had often heard mentioned by my good preceptor Father Francis, who had tasted it in the East, but which I had never before met with. All this was done with the most profound silence, and with a gliding, ghost-like step, which must certainly have been learned in the prisons of the Inquisition.

At length one of these stealthy attendants desired me, in the name of his lord, to take some refreshment, and then, with a low reverence, quitted the cabinet, as if afraid that I should make him any answer.

I could not help thinking, as they left me, what a system of terror must that be, which could drill any two Frenchmen into silence like this !

However, I approached the table, and indulged myself with a cup of most exquisite coffee, after which I examined the book-case, and glancing my eye over histories and tragedies, and essays and treaties, I fixed at length upon Ovid, from a sort of instinctive feeling, that the

mind when it wishes to fly from itself, and the too sad realities of human existence, assimilates much more easily with any thing imaginative than with any thing true.

I was still reading, and though sometimes falling into long lapses of thought, I was nevertheless highly enjoying the beautiful fictions of the poet, when the door was again opened, and the minister re-appeared. I instantly laid down the book and rose, but pointing to a chair, he bade me be seated, and taking up my book, turned over the pages for a few moments, while a servant brought him a cup of fresh coffee and a biscuit.

“Are you fond of Ovid?” demanded he, at length; and then, without allowing me time to reply, he added, “he is my favourite author: I read him more than any other book.”

The tone which he took was that of easy, common conversation, which two persons perfectly equal in every respect might be supposed to hold upon any indifferent subject; and I, of course, answered in the same.

“Ovid,” I said, “is certainly one of my favourite poets, but I am afraid of reading him so often as I should wish; for there is an ener-

vating tendency in all his writings, which I should fear would greatly relax the mind."

"It is for that very reason that I read him," replied the Minister. "It is alone when I wish for relaxation, that I read, and then—after every thought having been in activity for a whole long day—Ovid is like a bed of roses to the mind, where it can repose itself, and recruit its powers of action for the business of another."

This was certainly not the conversation which I expected, and I paused without making any reply, thinking that the Minister would soon enter upon those important subjects on which I could give the best and latest information: but on the contrary, he proceeded with Ovid.

"There is a constant struggle," continued he, "between feeling and reason in the human breast. In youth, it is wisely ordained, that feeling should have the ascendancy; and she rules like a monarch, with Imagination for her minister—though, by the way," he added with a passing smile, so slight that it scarcely curled his lip, "though by the way, the minister is often much more active than the monarch. In after years, when feeling has done for man all that feeling was intended to do, and carried him

into a thousand follies, eventually very beneficial to himself, and to the human race, Reason succeeds to the throne, to finish what feeling left undone, and to remedy what she did wrong. Now, you are in the age of feeling, and I am in the age of reason; and the consequence is, that even in reading such a book as Ovid, what we cull is as different as the wax and the honey which a bee gathers from the same flower. What touches you, is the wit and brilliancy of the thought, the sweetness of the poetry, the bright and luxurious pictures which are presented to your imagination; while all that affects me little; and shadowed through a thousand splendid allegories, I see great and sublime truths, robed, as it were, by the verse and the poetry in a radiant garment of light. What can be a truer picture of an ambitious and daring minister than Ixion embracing a cloud?" and he looked me full in the face, with a smile of melancholy meaning, to which I did not well know how to reply.

"I have certainly never considered Ovid in that light," replied I, "and I have to thank your Eminence for the pleasure I shall doubtless enjoy in tracing the allegories throughout."

“ The thanks are not my due,” replied the Minister ; “ an English statesman, near a century ago, wrote a book upon the subject, and showed his own wisdom, while he pointed out that of the ancients. In England the reign of reason is much stronger than it is with us in France, though they may be considered as a younger people.

“ Then does your Eminence consider,” demanded I, “ that the change from feeling to reason proceeds apace with the age of nations. as well as with men ?”

“ In general, I think it does,” replied he ; “ nations set out, bold, generous, hasty, carried away by impulse rather than by thought ; easily led but not easily governed. Gradually, however, they grow politic, careful, anxious to increase their wealth, somewhat indolent, till at length they creep into their dotage even like men.—But,” he added, after a pause, “ the world is too young for us to talk about the history of nations. All we know is, that they have their different characters like different men, and of course some will preserve their vigour longer than others, some will die violent deaths, some end by sudden diseases, some by slow decay. A hundred thousand years hence, men may know

what nations are, and judge what they will be. It suffices, at present, to know our contemporaries, and to rule them by that knowledge—and now, Monsieur le Comte de L'Orme, I thank you for a pleasant hour, and I wish you good night. Of course, you are still at an inn; when you have fixed your lodging, leave your address here, and you shall hear from me. In the mean while, farewell!”

Of course I rose, and taking leave, quitted the Palais Cardinal. What — ! it may be asked — Without one word on the important business which had brought you there? — Without a word ! The name of Catalonia was never mentioned, and yet the very next day, large bodies of men marched upon Rousillon. More were instantly directed thither from every part of the country. The fleet in the Mediterranean sailed for Barcelona, and in a space of time inconceivably brief, Catalonia was furnished with every supply necessary to carry on a long and active war.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE strange interview which I have described, of course yielded my thoughts sufficient employment. Was it—could it really be, I asked myself, that I had spent the last hour in conversation with the greatest statesman in modern Europe? And in conversation about what? about Ovid—the task of a school-boy in an inferior class—when I could have afforded him minute information upon events on which the fate of nations depended.

Could he have received prior information? Impossible! Our vessel had sailed with the fairest wind, and the speed of our passage had been made a marvel of by the sailors; I had lost no time upon the road, and it was impossible—surely quite impossible that he could have received tidings from Catalonia in a

shorter space, without, indeed, the Devil, as the vulgar did not scruple to say, sent him tidings from all parts of the world by especial couriers of his own.

One thing, however, is certain ; I went to the Palais Cardinal a very important person in my own opinion, and I came away from it with my self-consequence very terribly diminished.

My next reflections turned to the Minister's very unclerical dress, and I puzzled myself for some time in fancying the various errands which might have required such a disguise—for disguise it evidently was. Of course, I could conclude upon nothing, and was only obliged to end in supposing with the boy who had guided me thither, that no one knew how, or why, he did any thing.

My way home was easily found ; and retiring to bed, I dreamed all night, between sleeping and waking, of courts and prime ministers, and woke the next morning not at all refreshed for having passed the night in such company. I had more disagreeable society, however, before long, for when I had been up about an hour, and was preparing to go out and view the great and stirring bee-hive, whose hum reached me even in my own cell, the worthy host of the au-

berge bustled into the room with an appearance of great terror, begging a thousand pardons for his intrusion, but he hoped, he said, that if I had any thing in my bags which I wished to conceal, I would put it away quickly, for that the officers of justice were in the house, and he had heard them enquire for a person very much resembling me.

Of course, I laughed at the idea ; but the landlord had hardly concluded his tale, when in rushed two serjeants and a *greffier*, dressed in their black robes of office. One stationed himself at the door, one threw himself between me and the window, and then commanded me in the King's name to surrender myself.

I replied that I was very willing to surrender, but that there must be assuredly some mistake, for that I had not been in Paris sufficient time to commit any great crime.

“ No mistake, Sir ! no mistake ! ” replied one of the serjeants. “ People who have the knack, commit crimes as fast as I can eat oysters. You are accused, Sir, of filching. They say, Sir, you are guilty of appropriation. A good man, an excellent good man, Jonas Echimillia, of the persecuted race of Abraham, avers against you, Sir, that last night, towards ten of the

clock, you entered his dwelling, Sir, wherein he gives shelter to old servants cast off by ungrateful masters—in other words, Sir, his frippery, and notoriously and abominably seduced a white silk suit, laced with gold, to clope with you, to the identity of which suit he will willingly swear. So open your swallow-all, or trunk mail, and let us see what it contains.”

Whilst the worthy serjeant thus proceeded, the warning of my good friend the grocer came across my mind, and I thought that there was an affectation about the voice of the respectable officer, which made me suspect that the whole business might be contrived to extort money ; though, how they could know that I had a white silk dress, laced with gold, in the valise before me, I could not divine. However, I affected to be very much alarmed, and while I examined well the countenances of my honest guests, I feigned a wish to bribe them into a connivance.

“ Not for a hundred pistoles !” cried the principal serjeant.

“ Nay, nay,” said the landlord, who had remained in the room, “ worthy serjeant, you must not be too severe upon my young lodger. Consider his youth and inexperience. Echi-millia is a tender-hearted man, and would not

wish you to be hard upon him. Take a hundred pistoles and let him off."

The serjeant began to show symptoms of a relenting disposition, and expressed his pity of my youth and ignorance of the ways of Paris with so much tender-heartedness, that it overcame my gravity, and sitting down upon a chair I laughed till I cried. The two serjeants looked rather confounded, but the greffier, a little man, whose risible organs were apparently somewhat irritable, could not resist the infectious nature of my laugh, but began a low sort of cachinnation, which he unsuccessfully tried either to drown in a cough or stifle in the sleeve of his robe. The sympathy next affected the landlord, who, after looking wistfully first to one and then to another, with one eye-brow raised, and one corner of his mouth in a grin while the other struggled for gravity for near a minute, was at length overpowered by the greffier's efforts to smother his laughter, and burst forth, shaking his fat sides till the room rang. The serjeant at the door tittered, but the principal officer affected a fury that soon brought me to myself, though in a very different manner from that which he expected.

Starting upon my feet, I caught him by the

collar, and knocking his bonnet off his head, exposed to view the very identical person of my hectoring guide of the night before, though he had ingeniously contrived to change completely the shape of his face, by cutting his immense beard into a small peak, shaving each of his cheeks, and leaving nothing but a light moustache upon his upper lip. "Scoundrel!" cried I, giving him a shake that almost tore his borrowed plumes to pieces, "What, in the name of the Devil, tempted you to think you could impose on me with a stale trick like this?"

"Because you dined at a *table d'hôte* in Flemish lace," replied the other serjeant, continuing to chuckle at his companion's misfortune. "But come, young Sir, you must let him go, though you have found him out." And thereupon he threw back his robe, and grasped the sword which it concealed.

As I had imagined, my man of war was as arrant a coward as ever swore a big oath, and he trembled violently under my hands, till he saw his more valiant comrade begin to espouse his cause so manfully. He then, however thought it was his cue to bully, and exclaimed, in his natural voice, "Unhand me, or, by the heart of my father, I'll dash you to atoms!"

“The devil you will!” said I, seizing the foot he had raised in an attitude calculated to menace me with a severe kick. The window was near and open, underneath it was a savory dunghill from the stables at the side; the height, about twelve feet from the ground, so, without farther ceremony, I pitched the valiant soldado out head foremost, and drew my sword upon his companion, who ventured one or two passes, in the course of which he got a scratch in his arm, and then ran down-stairs as fast as he could after the landlord and the greffier, who had already led the way. Running to the window, however, from which I could see over the gate of the court into the street, I shouted aloud to the passengers to stop the sham serjeants.

The first who, with my assistance, had gone out the shortest way—whether he was used to being thrown out of window and did not mind it, or whether the dunghill was as soft as a bed of down, I know not, but by this time had gained his feet, and was half-way down the street. Where the Greffier had slunk to I cannot say; but the more pugnacious personage, who had drawn his sword upon me, was caught by the people attracted by my cries, as he was

in the act of making the best use of his legs, after his arms had failed him. It would have given me pleasure, I own, to bring even one of such a set of impostors to justice, but I was disappointed; for, just as a porter and a vinegar seller were bringing him back to the inn, he suddenly shook them away, slipped the serjeant's gown over his head, and scampered away through a dozen turnings and windings, with a rapidity and address which smacked singularly of much practice in running off in a hurry.

After a hot chase, the porter returned to tell me that he could not catch the nimble-limbed cheat, and calling him up to my chamber, I bade him take up my packages, and prepared to leave the house, after examining the contents of each valise, from which I found nothing missing, though sufficiently disarranged to show that they had afforded amusement to others during my absence the night before. Had they met with the diamonds, it is probable that they would have spared themselves and me the trouble of the somewhat operose contrivance to which they had recourse; but these, fortunately placed in the very bottom of the valise, with several things of less consequence, had escaped their search.

As we were passing into the court, the respectable landlord presented himself cap in hand, delivered his account, and hoped I had been satisfied with my entertainment, and would recommend his house to my friends; while all the time he spoke, there was a meaning sort of grin upon his countenance, as if he could hardly help laughing at his own impudence.

I answered him somewhat in his own strain, that the entertainment was what the reputation of his house might lead one to expect; and in regard to recommending it to my friends, that it was very possible I should have occasion to visit shortly the criminal lieutenant, when I would take care to commend it to his notice in the most particular manner, and point out its deserts to him with care.

"I' faith," answered the host, calmly, "I am afraid that the worshipful gentleman of whom you speak, will find but poor accommodation at my house, and therefore, feeling myself incompetent to entertain him as he deserves, I would fain decline the honour of his company."

After having paid my reckoning, I betook myself to the shop of the honest grocer, who heard my story without surprise, and in answer to my inquiry for a lodging, he replied that he

knew of one nearly opposite to his own house, but that he doubted whether it would suit a person of my condition, for it was small, and kept by an old widow, who, though very respectable, was any thing but rich.

I need not say this was the very sort of situation I desired, for after having paid mine host of the Rue des Prouvaires, my purse offered nothing but a long and lamentable vacuity, with three louis d'ors at the bottom, looking as lank and empty, when I drew it out of my pocket, as an eel-skin just stripped off one of those luckless aquatic St. Bartholomews. I was soon, then, installed in my new apartment ; and being left to myself gazed upon my scanty stock of riches, as many an unfortunate wretch has doubtless often gazed before me, calculating how long each several piece would keep life and soul together. And when they were expended, what then ? I asked myself—must I then write to my parents—confess my attachment to Helen—own that I murdered her brother—take from her mind any blessed doubt that might still remain upon it—snap each lingering affection that might still bind her to me in twain at once, and at the same time encounter the angry expostulation of my father,

for loving below my degree; as well as the calm reproaches of my mother, for having blinded her to that love—expostulations and reproaches which for Helen's sake I could have encountered, while there remained a chance of her being mine, but which now I felt no strength to bear, no motive to call upon my head. Oh! no, no! I could not write—poverty, beggary, wretchedness, any thing sooner than that: and starting up, I proceeded into the street, hoping to drive away thought amongst all the gay sights I had heard of in Paris.

As I passed along the Rue St. Jacques, a beggar asked me for charity; and instinctively I put my hand in my pocket, when suddenly the thought of my *own* beggary came upon my mind, and with a sickness of heart impossible to describe, I drew my hand back, saying I had nothing for him. “Do! my good lord, do!” cried the mendicant; “may you never suffer such poverty as mine, and if you should—for who can tell in this uncertain life—and if you should, may you never be refused by those you beg of.”

I could refuse no longer. It came so painfully home to my own bosom, that I gave him

a small piece which I had received in change, and then walked on, feeling as if I had just cast away a fortune, instead of giving a piece of a few sols to a beggar. Oh, circumstance ! circumstance ! thou art like a juggler at a fair, making us see the same object with a thousand different hues as thou offerest thy many coloured glasses to our eyes.

Passing on, I found my way to the Palais Cardinal, where, after having gazed for a moment or two at the enormous pile of building before me, the thousand minute beauties of which, the darkness had hidden from me the night before, I mounted the steps to leave my address, as I had been commanded. The doors of the palace, far from being guarded as I had previously found them, now seemed open to every one. Crowds of people of all classes were going in and coming out ; and every sort of dress was there, from the princely *justaucorps*, whose arabesqued embroidery left scarcely an inch of the original stuff visible, to the thread-bare *pourpoint*, whose long experience in the ways of the world, had rendered it as polished and as smooth as the tongue of an old courtier. All was whisper, and smiles, and hurry, and bustle ; and, though every here and there an

anxious face might be seen, giving shade to the picture, no one would have imagined that, through those gates issued forth each day a thousand orders of death, of misery, and of despair.

I entered with the rest, and as the way seemed open to every one, was walking on, when I soon found that all who passed were known; for hardly had I taken two steps across the vestibule, when an attendant placed himself in my way, asking my business. It was easily explained, and leading me into a small cabinet adjoining the hall, he took down a ponderous folio, and desired me to write my address. When I opened it I found it quite full, and the page took down another, wherein, at the end of many thousands of names, I wrote my own, with ink, that I doubted not would prove true Lethe, and turned away, even more hopeless than I came.

Spare time now became my curse; and joining with a restless and excited spirit, drove me through every thing that was to be seen in Paris, with an eagerness which soon exhausted its object. Day passed by after day, and the Minister took no notice of me. I spun out my meager funds, like the thread of a spider; but

still every hour I saw them diminish. Twice each day I sent to the auberge where I had lodged, to enquire whether little Achilles had yet arrived; and still my disappointment was renewed. Nor was this disappointment one of the least painful of my feelings, for in the solitariness of my being in that great city, I would have given worlds for his company, even although I could neither respect nor esteem him. And yet let me not do him injustice; mean qualities were so mingled in him with great ones—his folly was so strangely mixed with shrewdness—and his love of himself so singularly contrasted with the generous attachment which he had conceived towards me, that I hardly knew whether to look upon him with regard or contempt. Yet certainly I longed for his coming, and as the days went by and he came not, even while I smiled at remembering his poltronery, I could not help hoping that the little coward had met with no obstruction in the road.

In the mean while, my frugality served to prolong the sojourn of my three louis in my purse far longer than I could have expected; and perhaps my pain with it, at seeing them daily decrease. It was like the handfuls of

couscousou that they give in Morocco to persons dying of impalement, the means only of extending moments of misery. One day, however, in passing along the Rue St. Jacques, I saw lying on a book-stall, two treatises upon very different subjects, one relating to military tactics, and the other entitled "*The sure way of winning, or hazard not chance.*" The price of each was but a trifle, and in a fit of extravagance I bought them both. I had now wherewithal to employ my time, and I studied each of these two books with an ardour which, had it been employed continuously on any great or important subject, might have changed the face of my fortune for ever. The treatise on strategy, though perhaps not the best that ever was written, was, at all events, no detrimental employment; and on it I bestowed one half of my time. The other half was given to "*The sure way-of winning,*" which was neither more nor less, than an elaborate treatise upon gaming; with all the profound calculations of chances necessary to qualify a complete gambler. Thank God I was not by nature a lover of play, or by such a study I should have been irretrievably lost. As it was, I soon began to look upon the gaming-table as the only resource which for-

tune held out to me; and with indescribable assiduity and application, I went through every calculation in the book, working them out in my mind, hundreds and hundreds of times, till their results became no longer matters of arithmetic, but of memory.

Three weeks elapsed before I deemed myself qualified to encounter the well experienced Parisians; and by this time, I had but one louis remaining. This I changed into crowns, and with an anxious heart, proceeded as soon as it was dark to a house, where I was informed that the minor sort of gambling, in which alone I could indulge, was carried on every night.

A narrow dirty passage conducted to a small staircase, at the bottom of which I began to hear the voices of the throng above. At the top were two men wrangling in no very measured terms; and passing on, I entered a large room, where about twenty tables were set out, and most of them occupied. A crown was demanded for admission, which I paid; and then proceeded to examine the various groups that were scattered through the room. Squalid misery, devouring passion, and debasing vice, were written in every countenance I beheld.

Of course, the whole assembly were divided between losers and winners. Of the first, some were talking high and angrily, some were blaspheming with the insanity of disappointment, some were gazing with the silent stupefaction of despair, and some were laughing with that wringing, soul-less mockery of mirth, with which vanity sometimes strives to hide the bitterest pangs of the human heart. Of the winners, some were amassing their gains with greedy satisfaction, some were smiling with a sneering triumph at the poor fools they plundered, and some, with the eager falcon eye of avarice, were gazing keenly at the rolling dice or turning cards, as if they feared that chance might yet snatch their prey from out their talons.

The whole scene came upon my heart with a sickening faintness that had nearly made me turn and fly it all, but at that moment, a very polite personage, seeing a stranger, approached and invited me in courteous terms, to sit at one of the vacant tables, and try a throw of the dice; or, if I loved better the more scientific games, we would open a pack of cards, he said. I agreed to the latter proposal, and we sat down to piquet. He played a bold and more

hazardous game, I the quiet and more certain one, and though some fortunate runs of the cards made him eventually the winner, my loss was but two crowns.

“ One throw with these, for what you have lost,” said my adversary before we rose, offering me the dice at the same time. We threw, and I lost two crowns more. We threw again, and I was penniless.

I bore it more calmly than I had expected, but I believe it was more the calmness of despair, than any thing else, which supported me. However, wishing my adversary good night as politely as I could, I walked away, hearing him say in a whisper to one who stood near, “ He plays very well at piquet, that young gentleman. It was as much as I could do to beat him.”

Beyond a doubt this was meant for my hearing; and if so, it had its effect; for my first thought was what article of my scanty stock I could part with, to yield the means of recovering that night's loss. The diamonds which Achilles had entrusted to me, instantly suggested themselves to my mind, and the tempter, who still lies hid in the bottom of man's heart till passion calls him forth, did not fail to sug-

gest a thousand excellent and plausible motives for using them. "Achilles," said the Devil "had himself voluntarily given them to me, and even if he had not done so, I had just as much a right to them as he had—but if my conscience forbade me to take them ultimately, it would be very easy to repay the value, either when I should have recovered my losses at the gaming-table, or when I was restored to the bosom of my family."

Thank Heaven, however, I had honour enough left not to violate a trust reposed in me. I had still a diamond ring of my own. My mother had given it to me, it is true, but necessity more strong than feeling, required me to part with it, and I determined to do so the next morning. In looking for it, for I had ceased to wear it since I set out for Marseilles, I met with the packet of papers regarding the Count de Bagnol, which I had almost always kept about me; and looking over them, I was tempted again to read some of the letters. I went on from one to another, through the whole correspondence between the Count, then a very young man, and the rebellious Rochallois, and I found throughout, that fine discrimination between right and wrong, which is the chivalry of the mind. It was a

lesson and a reproach ; but as I had passed to the brink of vice, not by the short and flowery path of pleasure, but by a road where every step was upon thorns ; as I had been driven by errors and by accidents, rather than by indulgence, the road back seemed not so long as to those who have followed every maze of enjoyment in their course from virtue to vice. With me it wanted but one effort of the mind—but the moral courage to communicate my true situation to those I loved, and I should at once free myself of the enthrallment of circumstances. Such reflections passed rapidly through my mind, and I resolved to do what I should have done. But what are resolutions?—Air.

The next morning I carried my diamond ring to a most respectable jeweller, who bought it of me for one-fifth of its worth, and vowed all the while that he should lose by his bargain. Six louis, however, now swelled my purse ; and, as night came, my good resolutions faded like the waning sunshine. The cursed book of games found its way into my hands, and at seven o'clock I stood before the same house where I had left my money the night before.

Like the gates of Dis, the doors stood ever

open, and those feet which had once trod that magic path, could hardly cross it without again turning in the same direction.

On entering the room, the society which it contained struck me as even more ruffianly than the night before, and I fancied that many eyes turned upon me, as on one whose appearance there on the former evening had been remarked. My polite adversary was looking on at one of the tables, where the parties were playing for louis; but the moment his eye fell upon me, he came forward and offered me my revenge. "They are playing too high at that table," said he, as we sat down. "To my mind it takes away all the pleasure of the game to have such a stake upon it, as would pain one to lose. No *gentleman* ever plays for the sake of winning a great deal of other people's money, and therefore he ought to take care that he does not part with too much of his own. I play for *amusement* alone, and therefore let us begin with crowns as we did last night."

His moderation pleased me, and opening the cards, we again commenced our evening with piquet. He again played boldly, and I even more cautiously than before, but the cards were

no longer favourable to my adversary, he lost every thing, and in an hour I had fifty crowns lying beside me. Half a dozen persons had now crowded round us, and all joined in praises of my skilful play.

“ Too skilful for me, I am afraid,” said my adversary, maintaining his good temper admirably, though I thought I discovered a little vexation in his tone. “ I own, fair Sir, that you are my master with the cards; but you will not refuse me an opportunity of mending my luck with these,” and he took up the dice-boxes.

The spirit had now seized me, I had gained enough to wish to gain more. Bright hopes of turning Fortune's frowns to smiles, of freeing myself from all difficulties, of rising superior to my oppressive fate, began to swim before my eyes, and I willingly agreed to his proposal, never doubting that my ascendancy would still continue.

We played on rapidly, and soon the pile of coin by my side diminished — vanished — grew higher and higher on his, and with agony of mind beyond all that I had ever felt, my golden hopes passed away, and despair began to come

fast upon me, as louis after louis, of my last and only resource, melted from my touch.

With the cards all had been fair—that was evident enough; but now my suspicions began to be awakened in regard to the dice. I remembered those which I had split open at Luz, and as I threw, I watched narrowly to see whether there was any thing in those I played with, which might show them to be loaded. But no! they rolled over and over, turning each side alternately as fairly as possible. I next fixed my eyes on my adversary, when suddenly I saw him, with the dexterity of a juggler, hold the dice he took up in the palm of his hand, and slip two others in from the frill round his hand. When about to throw again, I saw him prepare to perform the same trick, and springing up, I pinned his hand to the table.

A loud outcry instantly took place; “The man’s mad!” “What is he about?” “Turn him out!” “Thrw him out of the window!” cried a dozen voices.

“You shall do it, if you like, gentlemen,” cried I, “provided this man has not now two false dice under his hand.”

As I spoke, I lifted his hand from the table, when, to my horror and surprise, there were no dice there.

I was dumb as if thunderstruck, and my adversary, with every feature convulsed with rage, lifted the hand I had liberated, and struck me a violent blow in the face. Instinctively I laid my hand upon my sword, when every one round threw themselves upon me, and in the midst of a thousand blows, I was hurried to the window, and though struggling violently to save myself, pitched over into the street.

CHAPTER XIV.

LUCKILY the window from which I was thrown was on the first-floor, and not above sixteen feet raised from the ground. My fall, therefore, was so instantaneous, that I had no time to indulge in any of the pleasing anticipations of which a journey head-foremost from a high window to the ground is susceptible. The fall, however, was sufficient to stun and bewilder me ; and before I had well recovered my recollection, I found myself surrounded by a good number of lackeys with torches, who had seen my sudden ejaculation from the gaming-house while accompanying some carriage through the streets, and had come to my assistance, with many enquiries as to whether I was hurt.

I had fallen upon my left shoulder and hip, and my head had fortunately escaped without

the same sudden contact with the stones, so that, though somewhat confused, I could reply that I believed I was not much injured, but, that I could not rise without assistance.

“ Help him to rise,” cried a voice which very much resembled that of the Chevalier de Montenero, “ and give him what assistance you can.”

The person who spoke I could not see, but the servants, who had been hitherto gazing at me without lending me any very substantial aid, now hurried to raise me, one taking me by each arm. This proceeding, however, gave me such exquisite pain in my left shoullder, that after a groan or two, and an ineffectual effort to make them comprehend that they were inflicting on me the tortures of the damned, I lost all recollection with the excess of agony.

When I recovered my perception of what was passing around me, I found that the servants had procured a kind of *brancard*, or litter, and having laid me upon it, were carrying me on, I conjectured, to the house of some surgeon.

They stopped, however, a moment after, at the entrance of what was evidently a very handsome private hotel, and passing through the *porte cochère* and the court, they bore me into

an immense *salle-à-manger*, and thence into a small chamber beyond, where I was carefully laid on a bed, and bade to compose myself, as a surgeon had been sent for, and would arrive, they expected, immediately.

He was not indeed long ; and on examining my side, he found that my shoulder was dislocated, but that I had sustained no other injury of consequence. After a painful operation, the process of which I need not detail, I was put to bed, and the surgeon having given me a draught to procure sleep and allay the pain I suffered, recommended me to be kept as quiet as possible, and left me. I did not, however, suffer all the servants to quit the room without enquiring whether I had not heard the voice of the Chevalier de Montenero.

The valet replied, that he thought I must have been mistaken, for he never heard of such a name in all his life ; but as there had been a good many persons round about when I was taken up, it was possible one of these might have spoken in the manner I mentioned.

I was now left alone, and I endeavoured to forget as fast as possible, in the arms of sleep, all the unpleasant circumstances round which memory would fain have lingered. It was in

vain, however, that I did so ; the feverish aching of my bones kept slumber far away. Every noise that stirred in the house I heard ; every step that moved along its various halls and passages seemed beating upon the drum of my ear ; I could hear my own blood rush along my veins and throb in my head, as if Vulcan and all the Cyclops of Etna had transferred their anvils to my brain.

While in this state, a light suddenly shone through the keyhole and under the door, and I heard several persons enter the dining-hall through which I had been borne thither. Every thing that was said reached my ears as distinctly as if I had been present, and I soon found that the principal person who entered was the nephew of the proprietor of the house. He had just returned, it seemed, from some spectacle, and bringing a friend with him, demanded supper with the tone of a spoiled boy, who knew that his lightest word was law to all who surrounded him. The supper was brought, with apparently all the delicacies he demanded, for he made no complaint, and having sent for all the most excellent wines in his uncle's cellar, he dismissed the servants, and remained alone with his friend.

Tossing about, restless and irritable, I was nearly frantic with their mirth and their gaiety, and could have willingly murdered them both to make them silent ; but soon their conversation began to take a turn which interested even me. The youth, who was evidently the entertainer, and whom his companion named Charles, had for several minutes been expatiating with all the hyperbolical enthusiasm of youthful passion, on some beautiful girl whom he had determined, he said, to marry, let who would oppose it. Her name was mentioned by neither of the speakers, their conversation referring to something that had passed before. With the very natural pleasure which most people experience in finding all sorts of obstacles to whatever another person proposes, the friend seemed bent upon suggesting difficulties in opposition to his companion's passion. "Consider, my dear Charles," said he, "this girl may be as beautiful as the day, but, from her father's situation, her education must have been very much neglected."

"Not at all ! not at all !" replied the lover. "Her education, as far as learning and accomplishments go, will shame the whole Court, and her manners are those of a princess of Eldorado.

Why, I told you, she has been brought up all her life by the Countess de Bigorre."

It may easily be supposed that such words did not tend to calm the beating of my heart; and in the agitation caused by thus suddenly discovering that Helen was the subject of their conversation, I lost what passed next. In a moment after, however, the lover replied to some question of his companion. "I do not very well know why her father took her away from the Countess and brought her to Paris; I should have supposed that it would have been much more convenient to him in every respect to have left her where she was. However, I am his most humble and very obedient servant, for I should never have seen her otherwise; and marry her I will, if I should carry her off for it."

"But her birth, Charles, her birth!" said his companion. "What will your uncle think of that?—he who is so proud of his own."

"Oh!" replied the hot-brained youth, "you know I can do any thing with my uncle; and besides, this father of her's has been quietly accumulating a large fortune, it seems, one way or another; and so that must cover the sin of her birth in my uncle's eyes. But say what you

will, or what he will, or what any one will, I will marry her if I live to be a year older."

"What! and discharge the little Epingliere, Jeannette?" asked his companion, with a laugh.

"Oh, that does not follow," answered the other; "'tis always well to have two strings to one's bow; and Jeannette is too charming to be parted with for these three years at least: but *Madame ma femme* will know nothing of *Mademoiselle ma bonne amie*, and I shall find her proud beauty the more delightful by contrasting it with the more modest charms of Jeannette."

"The more simple charms," you mean, "not the more modest," replied his companion; "I never heard that Jeannette was famous for her modesty!"

The opium draught which I had taken, counteracted in its effects by the pain of my body, and the irritation of my mind began to make me somewhat delirious. Strange shapes seemed flitting about my bed—I saw faces looking at me out of the darkness, and insulting me with fiendish grins. At the same time, the light way in which the weak young man in the next chamber spoke of Helen—of my sweet, my beautiful Helen—worked me up to a pitch of frantic rage, which mingling with the delirium

of opium, made me resolve to get up and avenge her upon the spot.

I accordingly raised myself in bed, and after sitting upright for a moment or two, with my brain seeming to whirl like the eddy of a stream, I got out with infinite difficulty, when the cold air, and the chill of the stones to my feet, in some degree recalled me to my senses, and instead of groping for my sword as I intended, I returned towards my bed : but coming upon it sooner than I had expected, I struck it with my knee, fell over upon it, and, with the sort of despairing heedlessness of fever and wretchedness, lay still where I had fallen, till the opium, overpowering me, I lost all recollection of my misery in a deep and deathlike slumber.

It was late ere I woke, and when I did so, it was with one of those dreadful headaches, which seem to benumb every faculty of the mind and body, while at the same time, the bruises all over my left side were even more sensitively painful than the night before.

The first thing I heard was a woman's voice enquiring how I found myself, and looking round I perceived a good-looking, fattish nun, of one of the charitable sisterhoods, sitting in a

chair by my bedside. She seemed one of those good dames who attach themselves to great families, and act as an inferior sort of almoner, performing the part of charitable go-betweens; attending the sick servants with somewhat more skill than an apothecary, and more attention than a physician; serving as head nurse to the lady of the mansion, and acquiring much consequence with the poor, by dispensing the bounty of the rich.

In answer to her question, I replied that I was in very great pain both from a violent headache, and the bruises I had received; whereupon she immediately produced the phial, from which the surgeon had the night before administered his sleeping draught, intimating that I must take another portion to relieve me from what I suffered, and informing me, at the same time, in a very oracular tone, that it was not at all wonderful that my bones ached, after sleeping all night naked on the outside of the bed.

As I attributed the excessive aching of my head entirely to the contents of the bottle she held in her hand, I resisted magnanimously all her persuasions to take more of its contents for some time; but at length, her offended au-

thority instigated her to such an outcry, that I would have drunk Phlegethon red hot to have quieted her. I took, accordingly, what she gave me, and was about to have asked some questions in regard to my situation, when she stopped me, with a profoundly patronizing air, and told me, that if I would promise to keep myself quite quiet, and not agitate myself, I should be favoured with a visit from a young lady who took an interest in me.

“Who, who? in the name of Heaven!” cried I, the idea of Helen instantly flashing across my mind. “Tell me, tell me who!”

“Use not Heaven’s name for such vanities, young gentleman,” said the nun. “Who the young lady is you will see directly; and I have only to tell you, that her father has granted her five minutes to converse with you, for old friendship’s sake, and she has promised that it shall be no more, therefore, you must not seek to stay her.” So saying, she left me, and in a moment after, the door again opened, and Helen herself, my own beautiful Helen, came forward towards me, with a look of eager gladness, that, while it surprised me, took a heavy load from off my heart.

She glided forward to my bedside, laid her

dear soft hand in mine ; after gazing for a moment on my worn and haggard features, burst into a flood of tears.

“ Dear, dear, Helen !” said I, “ Then you love me still ?”

“ And ever will, Louis !” answered she, speaking through her tears. “ Whatever they may say, whatever they may think, I will love you still, Louis, and none but you.—Only tell me that you love me also, and not another, as they would have me believe, and nothing shall shake the affection that I have ever borne towards you.”

“ Love another !” cried I. “ Helen, you have never believed them for a moment. For Heaven’s sake tell me, that such a base suspicion never for an instant made any impression on your heart.”

“ I never believed it, Louis,” answered she, “ for I never believed that any thing base could for a moment harbour in your bosom ; and yet it gave me pain, I knew not why.—But let me tell you what has happened to me personally during your absence. I cannot tell you my father’s motives, for I do not know them, but I can tell you——”

“ Oh no, no, Helen !” cried I, shrinking

from the detail of what must have followed the discovery of her brother's death, and beginning to doubt that she attributed it to me. "Oh no, no, dear Helen! spare me all that unhappy detail. I chanced to overhear last night, from some persons speaking in that chamber, that your father had come and taken you from the protection of my mother. I easily conceived his reasons—I heard all—I heard every thing, by that conversation last night; and all that now needs explanation is, how any one could dare to tell you that I loved another."

"Indeed, Louis, many believed it—every one, I may say, but myself," Helen replied; "but the time I am allowed to remain grows short. Before any thing else, let me communicate to you what my father bade me say for him. If you wish to see him, he says, he will see you; but you must be prepared if he does so, to explain to him every part of your conduct; and to show him, that the blood which he cannot help attributing to you, rests not on your head. Forgive me, Louis! oh, forgive!" she continued, seeing me turn deadly pale: "I pain you, I see I pain you; but it was only on condition that I would deliver this cruel message, that they would permit me to

see you. It is not I that ask you, Louis, to do any thing that is painful to you. I am sure—I am certain, you are not guilty. I cannot—I will not, believe it. But my father will not see you without you can explain it all. Can you then, dear Louis—will you see him?”

“Helen, I cannot,” replied I.

She gazed at me for a moment in silence.

“Hark! they call me,” said she at length. “Oh, Louis, before I go, say something to comfort me, say something to sustain in my breast that confidence of your innocence, which has been my consolation and my hope.”

“All I can say, dear Helen,” replied I, “is, that in wish, and intention, I was as innocent as you are; but that accident has made me appear culpable, and that I have nothing but my own word to prove that I was not purposely guilty.”

“But your own word is enough for me,” answered Helen, catching, I believe gladly, at any assurance that could maintain her belief in my innocence; “I will believe it myself, and I will try and make others believe it. But I must leave you, Louis; they are calling me again. Adieu, adieu!”

“But, Helen, dear Helen, you will see me

again?" cried I, struggling to raise myself.
"Promise me that."

"Most assuredly," answered Helen, "if they will allow me;" and obedient to a sign from the nun, who had returned to the room while I was speaking, she glided away and left me.

A thousand questions did I now ask the good sister, but with a curious felicity of evasion she parried them all; now with an affectation of mistaking me, now with an ambiguous reply; now with a refusal to answer, like a skilful fencer, who, whether his adversary lunges straight forward or feints, still finds some parade to guard his own breast, and repel the attack in all its forms. Not a word could I extract from her on any subject whereupon I wished information, and gradually the drowsiness of the opium began to take away the power of questioning her any farther.

From what I have learned since, I am led to believe, that the good lady in administering the sleeping potion which she had deafened me into taking, had poured out at least double what was ordered by the surgeon. At all events, its effect was much more rapid and powerful than the night before; for, with all the busy thoughts which my interview with Helen might well sug-

gest, with all the bitter remembrances it called up, with all the painful anticipations to which it gave rise, slumber came rapidly upon me ; and before half an hour had passed after her departure, I fell into a deep sleep, which a little more of the same sedative would probably have converted into the sleep of death.

CHAPTER XV.

WHEN I again awoke, it was night, but the darkness was not disagreeable to me. I was easier in bodily sensation than I had been in the morning; and I pleased myself with calling to mind every gentle word which my beloved Helen had spoken, with conjuring up again every sweet look, and dreaming over that fond devoted affection which, in the midst of the sorrows and un comforts that surrounded me, was like some guiding star to a voyager on the inhospitable ocean. But then came the idea of seeing her father; and I thought, even if she could convince him of my innocence, how could I clasp his hand with that which had slain his child. I remembered my feelings towards him when entirely abandoning his sweet child to the care of my mother, he seemed to

have resigned all his paternal rights, and it had been only my respect for Helen which had saved him from my unconcealed contempt.— I remembered too his long nourished dislike towards me, and I asked myself whether he would feel it less now, that he could not but suspect me of the death of his son.

Yet still, his pride might be gratified to ally his child to the house of Bigorre, and to see his descendants attached to that noble class, to which he could not himself aspire. But then again, if he had really accumulated so much wealth, as the conversation I had overheard had intimated, he could easily match his daughter, with so rich a dower of beauty as well as gold, amongst families as noble as my own, where no such fearful objections existed as that which interposed between Helen and myself. What needed I more? The weak youth, of whose passion for her I had been made an unwitting confident, with evidently high-birth and proud connections, stood ready to unite himself to the daughter of the low Procureur of Lourdes, and give her that rank and station, which I doubted not that Arnault coveted. Helen, I was sure, would never consent; and yet I teased myself with the dread,

fancying all that perseverance, and the persuasions and commands of a parent might do against an almost hopeless love.

While I thus alternately solaced myself with dwelling upon all the sweetness, the beauty, the affection of her I loved, and tormented myself with imagining all that might separate us ; epitomising in one short hour the many fluctuating hopes and fears of a long human life ; to my surprise the darkness became less opaque, and by the grey which gradually mingled with the black, I found that morning was imperceptibly stealing upon night, so that my slumber must have lasted more than twenty hours.

But a still greater surprise awaited me. Gradually as the day dawned, one object after another struck me as resembling the furniture of the little room which I had tenanted ever since I quitted the inn, after my arrival in Paris. Was I dreaming still ? or had I dreamed ? I asked myself. Had all I had seen during the last two days been but a delusion, or was I still labouring under some deception of my imagination. But no ! with the clear daylight it became evident that I was there—in the little chamber I had hired in the Rue des Prêtres St. Paul ? There was the

carved scrutoire, with its thousand grotesque heads; there the old table which had acknowledged more than one dynasty; there lay my clothes, my hat, my sword, as if I had left them there on going to bed the night before; and nothing served to show that the whole I have lately described was not a dream, except the bruises on my shoulder and side, which smacked somewhat painfully of reality.

In about an hour afterwards, my good landlady came in, to ask if I wanted any thing; and from her I learned that I had been brought home on a litter still sound asleep, by some persons she did not know, who told her I had met with an accident, and bade her take great care of me, enforcing their injunction with a piece of gold.

This was an effort of liberality on the part of Arnault which I had not expected, either from his own character, which was notedly avaricious, or from the general rule of nature, that the long habit of accumulating small sums narrows the heart and leaves no room for any generous feeling. I began to believe that I had been mistaken in his character, and I tried, fondly, to persuade myself with a theory as fallacious as any other of those fallacious things,

theories, that the father of so noble spirited a girl as Helen, whose whole soul was liberality, and her every thought a feeling, must, in some degree, partake of the same nature, and possess hidden qualities which, when called into action, would shine out and assert their kindred.

My good landlady, in common with all old women, had a strange prejudice in favour of keeping those she looked upon as sick, in bed ; but in spite of all her persuasions, I got up and dressed myself. My first care was to examine what money I had left after the sad dilapidation which the gaming-table had effected on my purse, though, indeed, I expected to find, that the tender-hearted gentleman who had thrown me out of the window, had charitably taken care that the few crowns which had remained in my pocket should not weigh me down in my descent.

My own purse, indeed, was gone ; but in its place, to my no small surprise, I found one containing a hundred louis d'ors. This, of course, had come from Arnault, though how he came to know that I stood in need of such supply, I could not divine. For some time I remained undetermined whether I should make use of the sum or not. Pride whispered, that

Arnault had removed me from the neighbourhood of his daughter, possibly to marry her to some one else ; and should I, then, accept the vile roturier's bounty—his charity ! At the same time necessity urged, that I had nothing but that for the daily wants of life ; that if I hoped ever to discover Helen's dwelling in that great city, and having done so, never again to lose sight of her, I must have the aid of that talismanic metal, whose touch discovers, and secures, and perfects every thing.

But a moment's reflection made me regard the question with better feelings ; Arnault had removed me from his daughter.—true ! but it was because he believed me to be the murderer of his son ; and he was therefore justified in doing so. He had placed the money where I found it, probably not out of charity ; for he knew that I could easily repay it ultimately, but to relieve me from a temporary necessity. There was yet another supposition—perhaps Helen had placed it there herself. Pride between me and Helen was out of the question ; and there was something so sweet in the very idea of following her wishes, even though she knew it not, that I should have looked upon hesitation after that supposition crossed my mind as the meanest of vanities. I deter-

mined then to make use of the money thus placed at my disposal, and to reimburse the donor, if Arnault, at a future period — if Helen had been the giver, to repay her whenever I could discover her abode, by telling her I had used it well.

The effort of dressing had caused me a great deal of pain, and while I sat down to rest myself afterwards, I sent a boy to enquire at my inn in the *Rue de Prouvaires*, whether my little friend Achilles had appeared there during my absence. In about half an hour I heard the rush of feet galloping up the stairs, with the rapidity of joy, the door flew open, and in rushed Achilles—but no longer the Achilles I had left him. The smart Spanish dress of which he had possessed himself at Barcelona was gone. The hat, the plume, the sword, had given way to all the external signs of poverty and want. His head was as bare as when he came into the world; and his shoulders were covered with a grey gown which had once belonged to a monk. The fashion of it, indeed, had been somewhat altered, for the cowl had been made servicable in patching several momentous rents which might otherwise have exposed the little man's person somewhat more than decency permitted.

"Well, Achilles," said I, when the first transport of his joy at finding me having passed away, I could find an opportunity of speaking, "you seem to have been engaged in traffic since I saw you, and not to have gained upon the exchange."

"Oh! you will pardon me, Monseigneur," replied he, grinning as merrily as ever, "I have gained a vast fund of experience. I know that is a sort of commodity, the returns upon which are slow, but they are very sure; and I will try to make the most of it."

"But from what I see," rejoined I, with somewhat, I am afraid, of a cynical sneer at the lightheartedness which I could not myself acquire, "I am afraid you paid very dear for your bargain."

"Not cheap, I confess," replied he; "somewhere about three hundred pistoles, a good suit, a dozen of shirts, and a whipping through the streets of Lyons, that is all."

"A whipping!" cried I; "that is a part of the account I did not reckon upon, and not one of the most pleasant, I should conceive. But come, Achilles, let us hear your story. It must be somewhat curious."

"Not very," answered Achilles; "but it is short, which is something in favour of a story."

After your Lordship's departure, I embarked in the boat for Lyons, as soon as it thought fit to sail, and we began our long slow voyage up the river, which at first was very tedious. Soon, however, I hit upon a way of amusing myself, for seeing a respectable old merchant of Lyons with a young lady, whom I took to be his daughter, I went up and introduced myself to them as Monsieur le Comte de Grilmagnac, told them that preferring the easy gliding motion of the river to the rumbling of a carriage, or the jolting of a horse, I had sent my equipage and servants by land, and instantly began to make love to the daughter.

“The old gentleman seemed so uneasy at the advances that I made in her favour, that I began to fear he suspected me; and to do away all doubt, when we stopped to dine I took a handful of gold out of my pocket, and asked what was to pay with the air of a prince. The young lady seemed ravished with the sight of the gold pieces, but my old merchant grew more uneasy than ever, and always got between me and the young lady when I wanted to speak with her, so that I began to grow suspicious in my turn, and to doubt whether the tie between them was not somewhat more tender than the

relationship. This doubt induced me to watch the pair more diligently than ever, for she was as beautiful a girl as ever your worship set your worshipful eyes upon, and the old gentleman as venerable an old piece of withered bamboo as ever fell into sin in his dotage; so you may easily conceive I could not bear to see such a rosebud withering upon such a desert.

“ Well, this went on with various success till we arrived at Lyons, and I cannot say my fair Phillis was at all inclined to second her guardian's efforts to repulse me, so that we had time to arrange that I should go to the *auberge* of the *Lion d'or*, on our disembarkation, and there wait a note from my fair enslaver. To the *Lion d'or* I went, and soon received a summons to fly to my charmer, whom I found, as her *billet doux* intimated, waiting for me in a very respectable lodging in the Rue St. Pierre.

“ Here—her face half in tears, half in smiles, like the opening of an April morning—she told me that she had now no friend but me, for that her cruel tyrant, the instant of their arrival, had commanded her to abandon me for ever. This the passion I had inspired her with would not permit; and being too frank, she said, to deceive any one, she had at once refused. A quar

rel ensued—he had cast her off pennyless, and though she could instantly fly to the Baron d'Ecunoir, or the Marquis de la Soupiere, she had preferred putting herself under my protection; for she owned that she never loved any one but me.

“Though this was as sweet as honey, yet as I well perceived that with such a charmer's assistance my dearly beloved pistoles would soon fly half over Lyons, I bethought myself seriously of the best means of transferring her, with all speed, to the Marquis de la Soupierre. However, to lull all suspicion of the waning state of my affection, I prepared to entertain her handsomely, till good luck should furnish me with the means of beating a quiet retreat; and accordingly sent to the traiteur's for a good dinner, as the very best means of consoling a distressed damsel.

“Over rich ragouts and heady burgundy the hours slipped lightly by, and I could see in my little Phillis's sparkling eye her satisfaction with the conquest she had made. Alas! that mortal joy should be so transitive! In the midst of our happiness, care, and melancholy, and gloom, and desprite rushed suddenly upon us, in the form of four ferocious archers, who pitilessly

arrested Phillis on the charge of having robbed her former venerable protector, and hurried me to prison along with her as an accomplice.

“ Phillis had taken care to hide the place of her retreat, but she knew not the cunning of archers ; and though, when they came, she protested her innocence in terms that would have convinced the hard heart of Minos, and won the unwilling ears of Rhadamanthus, yet as the whole of the stolen goods were found in her valise, the unfeeling archers would not believe a word ; and, as I have said before, we were both hurried to prison, without any farther ceremony than taking from us every farthing that we had in the world.

“ The next morning we were brought before a magistrate, who reserved Phillis's case for his private consideration. As to mine, as nothing could be proved against me, except that I had called myself the Count de Grilmagnac without being able clearly to prove all my quarters of nobility, I was ordered to be whipped through the town for my ignorance of heraldry, and then discharged. My whipping I bore with Christian fortitude ; but the loss of my doublet, which the executioner kept for his fee, and the loss of my money, which the archers kept be-

cause they liked it, tore my heartstrings, and setting out from that accurst town of Lyons, where injustice and cruelty walk hand-in-hand, I begged my way to Paris, and reached the famous hotel where you had appointed me to meet you. There the landlord told me no such person as your Lordship resided, and bade me get out for a lazy beggar. A black dog, that stood in the yard, instantly took up the matter where the landlord left off, and I was in the act of making my escape from them both when the boy you sent arrived, inquiring for me.

“The joy which took possession of my heart, I need not tell; suffice it, that I made the boy run all the way here, and that, having now found you, I have determined never to leave you, or let you leave me again; for, while we were together, nothing but good fortune attended us, and since we have been separated, nothing but ill luck has been my share; so, that the only consolation I can have, will be to hear, that while my scale was down, yours has been up, and that Dame Fortune has at least befriended one of us.”

I could not refuse to tell my history also to my little attendant, though it occasioned less

amusement to him than his had done to me; and his face grew longer and longer at every incident I detailed, till at last, passing over all that regarded Helen, I informed him that on being conveyed home I had found my pocket encumbered with a hundred louis.

This news instantly cleared his countenance. "Who would not be thrown out of window for a hundred louis?" cried he; "but Vive Dieu! your Excellence has suffered yourself to be desperately cheated in regard to your ring. Six Louis! If I know any thing of diamonds, it was well worth thirty. However, first let me exercise my chirurgical skill upon your Eminence's shoulder, and after that I will see whether the ring cannot be recovered."

"Nay, nay!" cried I, "my good Achilles, give me what titles of honour you like, except your Eminence; that is a rank which it might be dangerous to usurp. Call me your Majesty, if you like, but not your Eminence. As to the ring, I believe you are right, and I will willingly give double what I received, to recover it again."

"Less than that will do," replied Achilles: "a louis for me to buy myself a suit at a fripier's, a louis for an *Archèr de la cour*, and

the sum you had originally received, and I think I can manage it."

I warned him, if I may use the homely proverb, not to go forth to shear and come home shorn ; and having suffered him to examine my shoulder, gave him the address of the jeweller, and let him depart.

From my lodging, as he told me afterwards, he went to the shop of a fripier, where he furnished himself with a decent suit of livery, and thence proceeded to find out an archer of one of the courts of justice, to whom he explained the affair, and gave half a louis as earnest, promising the other half if the ring should be recovered. The eloquence of the little player touched the tender heart of the archer, at the same moment that the money touched his palm ; and, shouldering his partisan, without more ado he followed to the shop of the jeweller. Achilles entered alone, and desiring to see some diamond rings, made up a slight allegory to suit the occasion, informing the jeweller that his master, the Count de l'Orme, had commissioned him to buy him a handsome jewel, as a present for his mistress. The jeweller instantly produced a case of rings, which he spread out before the eyes of Achilles, commenting on their

beauty. Achilles instantly pitched upon the one I had sold, and asked the price. "Forty louis!" replied the jeweller; "and I only sell it so cheap, because I bought it second hand. I require no more than a fair profit. If I gain five per cent. may I be branded for a rogue!"

"I will tell you a secret, jeweller," replied Achilles. "You are very likely to be branded for a rogue. You bought this ring, knowing it to be stolen." The jeweller stared. "It was taken from the person of my noble Lord the Count de l'Orme," proceeded Achilles, "when he was knocked down and robbed in the Rue St. Jacques. One of the thieves is taken—the very one who sold it to you—a tall, dark young man, with curling hair, black moustache, and a beard not six months old. He says you gave him six louis for it; and as you know it to be worth forty, you must have been very well aware, when you bought it, that it was stolen."

"Ho, ho!" cried the jeweller, "so you wish to cheat me out of my ring. But come, my little man," he continued, catching Achilles by the collar, "I will send for an archer, and see you safe lodged in prison, without farther to do."

Achilles, according to his own account, took

the matter very calmly. "As to the archer," said he to the jeweller, "I thought to myself before I came here, that a man who gave but six louis for a diamond worth thirty, might be somewhat refractory, and, therefore, I brought one with me. Ho ! Archer ! Without there !"

The jeweller, not a little confounded, instantly let go Achilles's collar ; and, as the archer marched in with his partisan, began to shake in every limb, doubtless well aware that all his dealings would not bear that strict examination which they were likely to undergo, if chance should call the prying eyes of the law upon them.

"I take you to witness, archer," said Achilles, addressing his ally, "that I have offered this jeweller the same price which the young man swears he got for this ring, namely, six louis, and that he, the jeweller, will not sell it for less than forty, which proves that he knew it to be stolen."

"Certainly," said the archer, in a solemn tone.

"You never offered me the six louis," said the jeweller. "I never said I would not part with it under forty. Give me the six, and take

it, and the devil give you good for it ; for it is not worth more."

"Then you are a great rogue for having asked forty," replied Achilles, with imperturbable composure ; and, thereupon, he entered into solemn consultation with the archer, as to whether he could safely and legally give the money and take back the ring ; as it was evident the jeweller was an accomplice of the thieves, and ought to be brought to justice."

"Gentlemen," cried the terrified jeweller at length, alarmed at all the awful catalogue of pros and cons which Achilles and the archer bandied about between them. "I declare, on my salvation, I knew nothing of the ring being stolen. I thought the person who brought it here was some poor gentleman, pressed for money, who would sell it for any thing ; and, therefore, I offered six louis for it. All I ask back is what I gave, and I am content to present this worthy archer with a gold piece to compensate the trouble he has had."

"Give him the money," said the archer, "give him the money, and take the ring ; we must not be too hard upon the poor devil."

The money was accordingly given, the archer

received his fee, and Achilles carried off the ring to me in triumph ; not only having had the satisfaction of biting the biter, but also having won the warm friendship of an archer of the Court of Aides, which, to a man of his principles and practice, was a most invaluable acquisition.

CHAPTER XVI.

ACHILLES, on his return, amused me with the account I have just given, while he rubbed my shoulder with some unguent, bought for the purpose; and, though I was not over well pleased at having been played off as a robber, with so particular a description also as he had given of my person; yet I was not at all sorry that the jeweller had been pinched for his roguery, and not a little rejoiced with the recovery of my ring.

As I have before said, the little player, though as cunning as a sharper in some matters, was in others as simple as a child; and, like a boy with his first crown piece, fortune never gave him any sum, however small, but he seemed to think it inexhaustible. Thus, from time to time, he found so many delightful

ways of employing my hundred louis, that, had I followed his advice, one single day would have seen me at the end of all my riches : but I soon put a stop to the building of his castles in the air, by informing him that I intended to live with the most rigid economy, till such time as I had an opportunity of writing to my father ; at the same time begging him to make up his mind to follow my example, if he still held his intention of remaining with me.

“ Oh, very well, Monsieigneur, very well,” cried he, gaily, “ any thing contents me. I *can* live upon ortolons and stewed eels, but I do not object to onion soup and a crust of bread. Nay, when the soup cannot be had, the crust must serve.”

Having arranged in my own mind all my plans for pursuing my economical system as strictly as possible, I sat down to the long-deferred task of writing to my father : for now that I had seen Helen, half the difficulty was removed. No matter what were the contents of the letter which I wrote. It never went. Posts, in those days, were not the regular mechanical contrivances which our present glorious monarch has instituted for the purpose of facili-

tating the communication of every part of his dominions with the others. Couriers, indeed, passed to and fro from one part of the empire to another, carrying the letters of individuals, as well as the dispatches of the state ; but all the arrangements concerning them were much in the same state as Louis the Eleventh had left them. Their departure from Paris was at uncertain and irregular times ; and their journeys were generally directed towards the principal cities, having either commercial or political relations with the capital. The difficulty, therefore, of conveying any thing to a remote and little frequented part of the empire, delayed my letter for some time ; and, before an opportunity presented itself, circumstances had changed.

In the mean while I employed my mornings in searching for the mansion wherein I had seen Helen ; but, although aided by all the wit of little Achilles, to whom I communicated enough information to guide him on the search, I wandered through the streets of Paris in vain, watching the opening gates of every large hotel I saw, in the hope of beholding the livery in which the servants I had seen were dressed, and forcing my recollection to recal the appearance

of the archway under which I had been carried, till a thousand times I deceived myself into hope, and as often encountered disappointment.

Once only I thought myself sure of the discovery. The porte-cochère of a house near the Place Royale, struck me as the very same I had passed, while borne upon the *brancard* by the servants. Every ornament, every pillar was there as far as I could remember. There were the curious Gothic mouldings upon which the torch-light had flashed as we passed through—there were the two immense couchant bears carved in stone on each side of the arch, on the back of one of which the bearers had rested the litter, while their companions opened the gates. Every thing seemed the same; and, taking my stand under the porch of the monastery of the Minims, I kept watch for two hours, till a servant coming out, showed me, to my surprise, a livery totally different from that which I had both hoped and expected to see.

It may be asked what was my object in thus seeking for Helen, when I knew, when I felt that my union with her was impossible—when at the very thought, her brother's spirit seemed to rise up before me, and with the same ghastly look which he had worn in death, bid me forget

such hopes for ever. Why did I seek her? No one that has loved will ever ask. I sought her for the bright brief happiness which the presence of the loved still gives, after every expectation is crushed and withered. I sought her with that dreamy sort of lingering with which a mother hangs over the frail clay of her dead child. My hopes were blighted, my happiness was gone, and yet the very object that most nourished my regret was that on which I could look most fondly, and which I sought with the most anxious, most unremitting care.

Thus passed my mornings, in fruitless search and continual disappointment. My evenings flew in a different manner, not in studying "*The sure way of winning*," or in practising its precepts, for such a horror had seized me of that hell-invented vice, gaming, and of all that appertains to it, that my first care had been to throw the book I had bought into the fire. The temporary passion which had seized me, I looked upon, and can almost look upon now, as a fit of insanity; for taught as I had been from my infancy to abhor its very name, nothing but absolute madness could have hurried me to a vice at once so degrading and so dangerous—which, as far as regards the mind, is

in fact, at best, a combination of avarice and frenzy. I had now bought myself a variety of books on military tactics, and, without any defined purpose in the study, I spent my whole evenings in poring over these treatises of attack and defence—a greater and a nobler species of gambling than that which I had quitted, it is true, but only less mad, inasmuch as it is a game which any one nation can compel another to play, and where those must lose who have not studied to win.

I also went occasionally to a hall that an Italian fencer had fitted up in the rue Pavée, for the purpose of turning a high reputation he had acquired in Europe into ready money. Here the room, which was furnished with all sorts of arms offensive and defensive, was well lighted every night, and the assembled company either formed practising parties amongst themselves, or took lessons from the Italian himself, who was one of the most athletic men I ever beheld, and certainly a most complete master of his weapons.

My father, I have said, was perhaps the most skilful swordsman of his day; and he had taken care that his son should not be wanting in an accomplishment in which he was such a pro-

ficient. I was, therefore, certainly more than equal in point of skill to any one who frequented the Italian's hall, and very nearly a match for himself. This, however, seemed rather to give him pleasure than otherwise, and whenever I entered he saluted me with the respect which he enthusiastically imagined due to every one skilful in the noble science of arms, frequently inviting me to stretch my limbs with him in an assault, and taking a delight in showing me all the minute refinements of his art.

This was the sole diversion I allowed myself, though while I mingled with the crowds where I knew no one, and wandered through the streets, where I was a stranger, a sad feeling of loneliness—of miserable desolation, crept over my heart, and I returned to my lodging in the evening, grave, melancholy, and discontented.

Although there were now several companies of actors continually at Paris, to the play I never went, that being a sort of amusement too costly for the narrow bounds to which I had restrained my expenses ; and, indeed, so strictly economical was I in all my habits, that my good landlady began to fancy me in want, and to show her commiseration for my condition by all those little delicate pieces of charity which a

person who has felt both pride and suffering knows to evince towards those whose spirit has not yet wholly bowed to its fate. Any little delicacy which fell in her way she would add it to the breakfast that Achilles brought me from the *traiteur's*. Nor did she ever ask for her rent, but rather avoided me on those days when it became due; though I believe, in truth, she needed it not a little.

I understood her motives, and though I did not choose to undeceive her, I took care that she should not be a loser by the kindness which she showed me. Finding in her also a delicacy of feeling and refinement of conversation which were above her station, I would sometimes, when any chance led me to speak with her, endeavour to ascertain whether her situation had ever been more elevated than that which she at present filled; and on one of these occasions, she told me gratuitously that she had been in former years *gouvernante* to the beautiful Henriette de Vergne, whose private marriage with the Count de Bagnols, I have already mentioned more than once.

She was surprised to find that I was acquainted with so much of the history, of which she knew very little more herself. "As I was

found to have been privy to the marriage," said she, "I was sent away directly, and denied all communication with my young lady, after it was discovered; but I saw the bloody spot where the poor Count was slain, and the dents of the feet where the struggle had passed: and a tearful struggle it must have been, for two of the Marquis of St. Brie's men remained ill at the village for weeks afterwards, and no one was allowed to see them but his own surgeon. One of them died also, and his confession was said to be so strange, that the priest sent to Rome to know how far he was justified in keeping it secret. After that I came to Paris, and I heard no more of the family, which all went to ruin. except, indeed, some one told me that my young lady died shortly afterwards in a convent at Auch."

As I was, of course, anxious to transmit the papers which chance had placed in my hands, to any of the surviving members of the Count de Bagnol's family, I enquired particularly what information she could give me concerning them; but she was more ignorant of every thing relating to them than even myself.

One morning on my return from my vain searching after Helen, I was surprised on being

informed that a stranger had enquired for me during my absence, and had begged the landlady to inform me that he would call again in the evening.

Where reason has no possible clue to guide her through the labyrinth of any doubt she pauses at the gate, while imagination seems to step the more boldly in; and, as if in mockery of her timid companion, sports through every turning till she either finds the track by accident, or, tired of wandering through the inexplicable maze, she spreads her Dædalian wings and soars above the walls that would confine her. I had no cause to believe that one person sought me more than another, and yet my fancy set to work as busily as if she had the most certain data to reason from. My first thoughts immediately turned to Arnault, and my next to the Chevalier de Montenero; and so strange was the ascendancy which the last had gained over my mind, that the very idea of meeting with him inspired me with as much joy as if all my difficulties had been removed; but the description given in answer to my enquiries at once put to flight such a supposition. The stranger, my landlady informed me, was evidently a clergyman by his dress, and by his

manner and appearance she guessed him to be one of a distinguished rank. It was therefore evidently neither the Chevalier nor Arnault, and the only supposition I could form upon the subject was that the Cardinal de Richelieu had at length deigned to take some notice of me.

My disposition was naturally impatient of all expectation, and the dull heaviness of the last week, which I had passed day after day in the same fruitless pursuit, had worked me up to a pitch of irritable anxiety, which people of a different temperament can hardly imagine. I wearied imagination, I exhausted conjecture; I hoped, I feared, I doubted, till day waned and night came; and, giving up all expectation of seeing the stranger that evening, I cursed him heartily for having said he would come and not keeping his word, and sat down once more to my theory of tactics. I had scarcely, however, got through one quarter of a campaign, when the rapid motion of Achilles' feet on the stairs announced news of some kind, and in a moment after he threw open the door giving admission to a stranger.

The person who entered was not much older than myself; he was tall and apparently well-made, but his clerical dress served him a good

deal in this respect, concealing a pair of legs which were somewhat clumsy, and not the straightest in the world. His head was one of the finest I have ever seen; and his face, without, perhaps, possessing, one feature that was regularly handsome, except the full rounded chin and the broad expanse of forehead, instantly struck and pleased, giving the idea of great powers of mind joined with a light and brilliant wit that sparkled playfully in his clear dark eye. He bowed low as he entered, and advanced towards a seat, which I begged of him to take, with that quietness of motion, which without being stealthy, is silent and calm, and is ever a sign of high breeding and good society. I made Achilles a sign to withdraw, and expressing myself honoured by the stranger's visit, begged to know whether I was to attribute it to any particular object, or merely to his kind politeness towards a stranger.

“If there were any kindness in doing a pleasure to oneself,” replied the stranger, “I would willingly take the credit of it; but in the present instance, as the gratification is my own, I cannot pretend to any merit.”

This answer was somewhat too vague to satisfy me; and I replied, “that I was fully

sensible of the honour done me; and would have much pleasure in returning his visit, when I knew where I might have the opportunity."

My method of receiving him, as equal with equal, seemed, I thought, somewhat to surprise him; for half closing his eyes, in a manner which seemed common to him, he glanced round my small apartment with a scrutinizing look, too brief to be impertinent, and yet too remarking to escape my notice. "I shall esteem myself honoured by your visit," replied he, at length; "I am but a poor Abbé—my name Jean de Gondi, and you will find me for the present at the house of my uncle, the Duke de Retz."

It was, indeed, the famous Abbé, afterwards Cardinal de Retz, with whom I was then in conversation. Not yet three and twenty years of age he had already acquired one of the most singular reputations that ever man possessed. Daring, intriguing, and ambitious, nothing daunted him in his enterprises, nothing repelled him in their course. Storms and tumults were his element; and when, before he was seventeen, he wrote his famous "*Conjuration de Fiesque*," he seemed to point out the scene in which he was himself destined to act, to which nature prompted him from the first, and circumstances called

him in the end. In his manner, there was a strange mixture of calm suavity, thoughtless vivacity, policy, frankness, and pride, which, combined together, served perhaps better to cover his immediate motives, and hide his real character, than the appearance of any uniform habit of mind, which he could have assumed.

All men contain within themselves strange contradictions; but he was the only one I ever knew, who, upon the most mature reflection, acted in continual contradiction to himself. He would often put in practice the most consummate strokes of policy to gain a trifle, or to satisfy an appetite; and he would commit the most egregious follies and affect the most extravagant passions, to hide the shrewdest political schemes, and conceal the best calculated and most subtle enterprises. He was a man on whom one could never calculate with certainty. It seemed his pleasure to disappoint whatever expectations had been formed of him; and yet to hear him reason, one would have judged that the slightest action of his life was regulated by strong conclusions, from fixed unvarying principles.

I had heard his character from many others, as well as from the Marquis de St. Brie, but

as this last gentleman had calculated, when he sketched it to me, that my life would be limited to three days at the utmost, he could have had no possible motive in deceiving me.

With this knowledge of his character, then, it required no great discernment to see that the visit of De Retz was not without an object; and resolving, if it were possible, to ascertain precisely what that object was, I bowed on his announcing himself, and said, "Of course, Monsieur de Retz, it is needless for me to give you my name. You were certainly aware of that, before you did me the honour of this visit."

"No indeed!" replied he, "I am perfectly ignorant both of your name and rank, though by your appearance and by all I have heard of you, I can have no doubt in regard to the latter. The truth is, I was informed by persons on whom I could depend, that a young gentleman of singularly prepossessing appearance and manners, had taken this apartment, and was supposed to be under some temporary difficulty."

I turned very red, I believe; but he proceeded. "People will talk of their neighbours' affairs, you know; and 'tis useless to be angry with them—but hearing this, as I have said, I

felt an irresistible impulse to visit you, and to render you any assistance in my power. Nor will I regret it, even if I have been misinformed, inasmuch as it has gained me the pleasure of your acquaintance."

With such a speech there was no possible means of being offended, though I felt not a little angry at my affairs having been made matters of commiseration throughout the town. I was rather inclined to believe also, that the trouble which M. de Retz had given himself, did not originate entirely in benevolence. I did not doubt that charity might have some part therein, for he had acquired a reputation, which I believe he deserved, for generous feeling towards the sufferings of his fellow-creatures; but the motives of men are so mixed that it is in vain tracing their original source. Like a great stream, the course of human action arises very often in five or six different fountains, each of which has nearly the same right as the others to be considered the head: and besides this, in flowing on from its commencement to its end, it receives the accession of a thousand other different currents, so that at the last, not one drop in a million, is the pure water which welled from any individual source.

I was very sure, therefore, of doing Monsieur de Retz no great injustice, in supposing that his benevolence might be tinged with other feelings, and I replied, "I should be sorry, Sir, that a mistake had given you the trouble of coming here, did I not derive so much benefit from that false rumour. My name is the Count de L'Orme, and I am happy that the bounty you proposed to exercise upon me, may be turned towards some other person more needing and deserving it than I do."

"Be not offended, Monsieur de L'Orme," replied De Retz, "at a mistake which has nothing in it dishonouring. Poverty is much oftener a virtue than wealth. But your name strikes me—De L'Orme!—Surely that was not the name of the young gentleman that his highness the Count de Soissons expected to join him from Bearn—Oh, no—I remember—it was Count Louis de Bigorre."

"But no less the same person," replied I, with an unspeakable joy at seeing the clouds break away that had hung over my fate—at finding myself known and expected where I had fancied myself solitary amongst millions. I felt as if at those few words I leapt over the barrier which had confined me to my own lone-

liness, and mingled once more in the society of my fellows. "I have always," continued I, "been called Count Louis de Bigorre, but circumstances induced me, when I left my father's house, to assume the title which really belongs to the eldest son of the Counts of Bigorre."

Monsieur de Retz saw that there was some mystery in my conduct, and he applied himself to discover my secret with an art and industry, which would have accomplished much greater things. Nor did I take any great pains to conceal it from him. It is astonishing how weakly the human heart opens to any one who brings it glad news. The citadel of the mind throws wide all its gates, to receive the messenger of joy, and takes little heed to secure the prisoners that are within. In the course of half an hour my new acquaintance had made himself acquainted with the greater part of my history; and when I began to think of putting a stop to my communication, I found that the precaution was of no use.

The moment, however, that he saw me begin to retire into myself, he turned the conversation again to the Count de Soissons, whom he advised me to seek without loss of time, "You will find in him," said he, "all that is

charming in human nature. In his communion with society, he had but one fault originally ; which was great haughtiness. He knew that it was a fault, and has had the strength of mind to vanquish it completely ; so that you will see in him one of the most affable men that France can boast. In regard to his private character, you must make your own discoveries. The great mass of a man's mind, like the greater part of his body, he takes care to cover, so that no one shall judge of its defects, except they be very prominent ; and there are, thank God, as few that have hump-backed minds, as hump-backed persons. Indeed, it has become a point of decency to conceal every thing but the face even of the mind, and none but tatterdemallions and sans culottes ever suffer it to appear in its nakedness. To follow my figure, then, Monsieur le Comte is always well-dressed, so that you will find it difficult to know him ; but, however, it is not for me to undress him for you. Take my advice, set out for Sedan to-morrow, where, of course, you know he is—driven from his country by the tyrannizing spirit of our detested and detestable Cardinal. I rather think the Count intends to initiate you somewhat deeply into politics, but that must be his

own doing also. Break your fast with me to-morrow, and I will give you letters and more information. Is it an engagement?"

I accepted the invitation with pleasure, and having answered one or two questions which I put to him, M. de Retz left me for the night.

CHAPTER XVII.

BEFORE I proceed farther with my own narrative, it may be as well to take a slight review of the history of the Count de Noissons, whose fate had a great effect upon the course of my whole future life. Nor is it here unworthy of remark, how strangely events are brought about by Providence, while we walk blind and darkling through this misty existence, groping our way onward on a path from which we cannot deviate. An accidental word, a casual action, will change the whole current of life, make a hermit of a monarch, and a monarch of a shepherd; as we sometimes see near the head of a stream a small hillock that a dwarf could stride, turn the course of a mighty river, far from the lands it flowed towards at first, and send its waters wandering over other coun-

tries to kingdoms, and oceans, and hemispheres afar.

The ancient county of Vendome, was in the year 1515 erected into a duchy by Francis the First, in favour of Charles de Bourbon, a direct lineal descendant from Robert Count de Clermont, fifth son of Saint Louis. Charles de Bourbon thus Duke of Vendome, left five sons, only two of whom had children, Antoine the elder, and Louis the younger. The first, by his marriage with Jeanne d'Albret, became King of Navarre and left one only son, who by default of the line of Valois, succeeded to the crown of France, under the title of Henri Quatre. Louis the younger brother, became Prince of Condé, and having been twice married, left a family by each wife. By his first marriage, descended the branch of Condé : and by the second, he left one son, Charles Count de Soissons, whose son Louis is the prince referred to in the foregoing pages.

Setting out in life with great personal activity and address, immense revenues, considerable talents, and high rank, it is little to be wondered at, that the young Count de Soissons, under the management of a weak, an indulgent, and a proud mother, should grow up

with the most revolting haughtiness of character. From morning till night he heard of nothing but his own praises or his own rank, and by the time he was eighteen, his pride of demeanour was so repulsive and insupportable, that it was a common saying, that "No one saw the Count de Soissons twice; for if he did not dislike them and forbid them to return, they were disgusted with him and would not go back."

But as the fault was more in his education than in his disposition, its very excess corrected itself.

He gradually found himself avoided by those whom Heaven had designed for his companions, and sometimes even deserted by his very servants, so that he was often left alone to enjoy his rank and dignity by himself. Under these circumstances he evinced qualities of mind far superior to the petty vice which shrouded it. He had equally the wisdom to see that the fault lay in himself, the judgment to discover in what that fault consisted, and the energy to conquer it entirely. Not a trace of it remained in his manners, nor did any of his actions, but upon one occasion, ever give cause to suppose that a touch of his former

haughtiness rested even in the inner recesses of his heart. With a rare discrimination, also, of which few are master, in the examination to which he subjected his own character, he separated completely the good from the bad, and took the utmost care to preserve that dignity of mind, which is the best preservation against base and petty vices, even while he cast from him the pride which is in itself a meanness.

Many men in correcting themselves of the vices of a bad education, would have felt some degree of bitterness towards the person to whose weakness that education and its vices were owing; but towards his mother the Count de Soissons ever remained a pattern of filial affection, consulting her wishes and inclination on every occasion where his own honour and character were not interested in opposing her.

The consequences of the change which he had effected in himself were not long in rewarding him for the effort he had made, and in a very few years he found that affection followed him every where instead of hate. The bright qualities of his mind, and the graces of his person, shone out with a new light, like the glorious sun bursting through a cloud. He was

adored by the army, loved by the people ; and princes were proud to be his friends.

At this time, however, the councils of France became embarrassed and disordered, and it was difficult even to run one's course quietly through life, so many were the dangers and evils that lurked about on all sides. Every step was up, on an earthquake, and few could keep their footing steadily to the end. The Cardinal de Richelieu had already snatched the reins of government from the feeble hands that should have held them, and saw before him a wide field of power and aggrandizement, with few to oppose his putting in the sickle and reaping to his heart's content. The power, the wealth, the popularity of the Count de Soissons gave him the opportunity of so opposing had he been so minded ; and Richelieu was not a man to live in fear. He resolved, therefore, to win him, or to crush him. To win him offered most advantages, if it could be accomplished ; and deeming also that it would be more easy than the other alternative, Richelieu resolved to attempt it. For this purpose he united, in one Circean cup, every thing that he fancied could tempt the ambition or passions of him he sought to gain. By a confidential messenger he proposed to

the Count the hand of his favourite niece, the Duchess d'Aquillon, offering as her dower an immense sum of ready money, the reversion of all his own enormous possessions, the sword of Constable of France, and what provincial government the Count might choose ; and doubtless he deemed such an offer irresistible.

Not so the Count de Soissons, who conceived himself insulted by the proposal, and the only spark of his ancient haughtiness that remained breaking forth into a flame, he struck the messenger for daring to propose the hand of Marie de Vignerot, widow of a mean provincial gentleman, to a prince of the blood royal of France.

Contemned and rejected, personal resentment became added to the other motives which urged Richelieu to the destruction of the Count de Soissons. Personal resentments never slept with him ; they lived while he lived, nor were they even weakened by sickness and approaching death. No means but one existed of gratifying his animosity towards the Count de Soissons ; which was, to implicate him with some of the conspiracies which were every day breaking forth against the tyranny of the government. But even this was difficult ; for, though living

with princely splendour, the Count continued to reside in the midst of the court, where all his actions were open, and nothing could be attributed to him on which to found an accusation. Hatred, however, is ingenious; a thousand petty vexations were heaped upon him, and, in the end, even personal insult was added, but without effect.

The Count firmly resisted all the temptations which were held out to him to sully himself with any of the intrigues of the day. The solicitations of his friends, or the persecutions of his enemies, were equally in vain; and, when human patience could no longer endure the grievances to which he was subjected at the Court of France, he left it for Italy, bearing with him the love and regret of the noblest of his countrymen.

A retreat, however, which left him free, unstained, and happy, neither quieted the fears, nor appeased the hatred of Richelieu; but, forced to dissemble, he gradually appeared to abandon his evil intentions, invited the Count to return, and one by one made him such proposals as were likely to efface his former conduct, without exciting suspicion by a sudden change. The Prince was not competent to cope

with so deep an adept in the art of deceit ; and, though still remembering with indignation the insults that had been offered him, he suffered himself to be persuaded that they would not be repeated, and returned to the Court of France.

The minister lost no time, and at length effected his object. On his return the Count found the best laws of the state defeated, individual liberty lost, and the public good sacrificed to the particular interests of one ambitious man. Richelieu took care that a thousand new affronts should mix a full portion of personal enmity with the Count's more patriotic feelings, and in the end the Prince suffered himself to be led into the conspiracy of Amiens.

The weak and fickle Duke of Orleans had been placed in command over the Count de Soissons at the siege of Corbie ; and, brought in closer union from this circumstance than they had ever been before, the two princes had various opportunities of communicating their grievances, and concerting some means of crushing the tyranny which at once affected themselves personally, and the whole kingdom. There were not wanting many to urge that the

assassination of the Cardinal was the only sure way of terminating his dominion ; but as the consent of the Count de Soissons could never be obtained to such a measure, it was determined to arrest the minister at the Council at Amiens, and submit his conduct to the judgment of a legal tribunal. The irresolution of the Duke of Orleans suspended the execution of their purpose at the moment most favourable for effecting it, and before another opportunity presented itself, the conspiracy was discovered ; and the Duke of Orleans fled to Blois, while Monsieur le Comte, (as the Count de Soissons was usually called,) retired across the country to the strong town of Sedan, the gates of which were willingly thrown open to him by the Duke of Bouillon, who, though a vassal of France, still held that important territory between Luxembourg and Champagne, in full and unlimited sovereignty.

Here the Prince paused in security, well aware that Richelieu would never dare to attempt the siege of so strong a place as Sedan, while pressed on every side by the wars he himself had kindled : and here also he was, at the time of my arrival in Paris, though in a

very different situation from that in which he at first stood in Sedan.*

* This chapter in the original MSS. appears written in a different hand from the rest, and was probably interpolated long after the composition of the whole to explain historical circumstances which had passed from men's memories.

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